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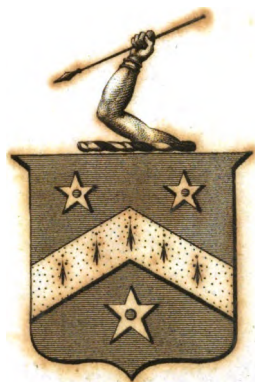
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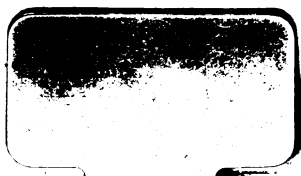
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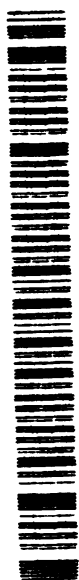
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W. Haldimand





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THE
THEOLOGICAL
WORKS
OF
ISAAC BARROW, D.D.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

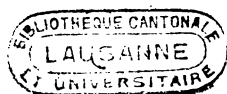
VOLUME III.

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CONTAINING
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SERMON L.

OF INDUSTRY IN GENERAL.

ECCLES. ix. 10.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.

IN St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, among divers excellent rules of life, prescribed by that great master, this SERM.
L. is one, Τὴ σπουδῇ μὴ ἄνεγοι, *Be not slothful in business*, or to Rom. xii. business; and in the second Epistle to the Corinthians, 11. among other principal virtues, or worthy accomplishments, for *abounding* wherein the Apostle commendeth those Christians, he ranketh *all diligence*, or industry exercised in all affairs and duties incumbent on them: this Πάντα σπουδῇ.
2 Cor. viii. is that virtue, the practice whereof in this moral precept 7. or advice the royal Preacher doth recommend unto us; being indeed an eminent virtue, of very general use, and powerful influence upon the management of all our affairs, or in the conduct of our whole life.

Industry, I say, in general, touching all matters incident, which *our hand findeth to do*, that is, which dispensation of Providence doth offer, or which choice of reason embraceth, for employing our active powers of soul and body, the Wise Man doth recommend; and to pressing the observance of his advice (waving all curious remarks either critical or logical upon the words) I shall presently apply my discourse, proposing divers considerations apt to excite us thereto; only first, let me briefly describe it, for our better apprehension of its true notion and nature.

SERM. By industry we understand a serious and steady application of mind, joined with a vigorous exercise of our active faculties, in prosecution of any reasonable, honest, useful design, in order to the accomplishment or attainment of some considerable good; as for instance, a merchant is industrious, who continueth intent and active in driving on his trade for acquiring wealth; a soldier is industrious, who is watchful for occasion, and earnest in action toward obtaining the victory; and a scholar is industrious, who doth assiduously bend his mind to study for getting knowledge.

Industry doth not consist merely in action; for that is incessant in all persons, ^a our mind being a restless thing, never abiding in a total cessation from thought or from design; being like a ship in the sea, if not steered to some good purpose by reason, yet tossed by the waves of fancy, or driven by the winds of temptation somewhither. But the direction of our mind to some good end, without roving or flinching, in a straight and steady course, drawing after it our active powers in execution thereof, doth constitute industry; the which therefore usually is attended with labour and pain; for our mind (which naturally doth affect variety and liberty, being apt to loathe familiar objects, and to be weary of any constraint) is not easily kept in a constant attention to the same thing; and the spirits employed in thought are prone to flutter and fly away, so that it is hard to fix them: and the corporeal instruments of action being strained to a high pitch, or detained in a tone, will soon feel a lassitude somewhat offensive to nature; whence labour or pain is commonly reckoned an ingredient of industry, and laboriousness is a name signifying it; upon which account this virtue, as involving labour, deserveth a peculiar commendation; it being then most laudable to follow the dictates of reason, when so doing is attended with difficulty and trouble.

Such in general I conceive to be the nature of industry; to the practice whereof the following considerations may induce.

^a Ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ φύσιν ἔχουσα τῷ ποιεῖν διακινεῖται, οὐκ ἀνίσταται ἑρμῆς, ἱμπεραται. τὸ ζῆν τὴν ἐκείνην ἡ θεία, &c. *Chrys. in Act. Or. 33.*

1. We may consider that industry doth besit the constitution and frame of our nature ; all the faculties of our soul and organs of our body being adapted in a congruity and tendency thereto : our hands are suited for work, our feet for travel, our senses to watch for occasion of pursuing good and eschewing evil, our reason to plod and contrive ways of employing the other parts and powers ; all these, I say, are formed for action ; and that not in a loose and gadding way, or in a slack and remiss degree, but in regard to determinate ends, with vigour requisite to attain them ; and especially our appetites do prompt to industry, as inclining to things not obtainable without it ; according to that aphorism of the Wise Man, *Ἐπιθυμία δακνὴν ἀποκτείνεισιν*—*The desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour* ; that is, he is apt. to desire things which he cannot attain without pains ; and not enduring them, he for want thereof doth feel a deadly smart and anguish : wherefore in not being industrious we defeat the intent of our Maker ; we pervert his work and gifts ; we forfeit the use and benefit of our faculties ; we are bad husbands of nature's stock.

SERM.
L.

Prov. xxi.
25. xiii. 4.

2. In consequence hereto industry doth preserve and perfect our nature, keeping it in good tune and temper, improving and advancing it toward its best state. The labour of our mind in attentive meditation and study doth render it capable and patient of thinking upon any object or occasion, doth polish and refine it by use, doth enlarge it by accession of habits, doth quicken and rouse our spirits, dilating and diffusing them into their proper channels. The very labour of our body doth keep the organs of action sound and clean, discharging fogs and superfluous humours, opening passages, distributing nourishment, exciting vital heat : barring the use of it, no good constitution of soul or body can subsist ; but a foul rust, a dull numbness, a resty listlessness, a heavy unwieldiness must seize on us ; our spirits will be stifled and choked, our hearts

^b Πάντα γὰρ ἡ ἀργία βλάπτει, καὶ τὰ μέλη σώματος αὐτὰ, &c. Chrys. in Λθ. Οὐαί. 35.

Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ τοῦτο τὸ σῶμα ἑκλυτον, &c. Ibid.

SERM. will grow faint and languid, our parts will flag and decay;
 L. the vigour of our mind and the health of our body will be much impaired.

• It is with us as with other things in nature^c, which by motion are preserved in their native purity and perfection, in their sweetness, in their lustre, rest corrupting, debasing, and defiling them. If the water runneth, it holdeth clear, sweet, and fresh; but stagnation turneth it into a noisome puddle: if the air be fanned by winds, it is pure and wholesome; but from being shut up, it groweth thick and putrid: if metals be employed, they abide smooth and splendid; but lay them up, and they soon contract rust: if the earth be belaboured with culture, it yieldeth corn; but lying neglected, it will be overgrown with brakes and thistles^d; and the better its soil is, the ranker weeds it will produce: all nature is upheld in its being, order, and state, by constant agitation; every creature is incessantly employed in action conformable to its designed end and use; in like manner the preservation and improvement of our faculties depends on their constant exercise.

3. As we naturally were composed, so by divine appointment we were originally designed for industry; God did not intend that man should live idly, even in his best state, or should enjoy happiness without taking pains; but
 Gen. ii. 15. did provide work enough even in Paradise itself; for *the Lord God, saith the text, took man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it*; so that had we continued happy, we must have been ever busy, by our industry sustaining our life, and securing our pleasure; otherwise weeds might have overgrown Paradise, and that
 Prov. xxiv. of Solomon might have been applicable to Adam; *I went*
 30, 31. *by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof.*

^c Πᾶσις ἡ φύσις χρησίμος, ὁ τροφὴν, ἢ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος; πῶς αὖτις, ἢ πᾶσις, ἢ ἀργῶσα; πῶς οὖν ὕδαρ, τὸ εὐρίχον, ἢ τὸ ἱσῶς; πῶς εὐδῆρος, ὁ αἰμαίνος, ἢ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος, &c. Chrys. in *AE. Orat.* 35.

^d Neglectis urenda filix innascitur agris. *Hor. Ser.* i. 3.

Plut. πρὸ παιδὸς ἀγωγῆς, p. 3. edit. Steph.

4. By our transgression and fall the necessity of industry SERM. L.
 (together with a difficulty of obtaining good, and avoiding evil) was increased to us; being ordained both as a just punishment for our offences, and as an expedient remedy of our needs: for thereupon *the ground was cursed to bring forth thorns and thistles to us*; and it was our doom pronounced by God's own mouth, *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground*: so that now labour is fatally natural to us; now *man*, as Job Job v. 7. *faith, is born to labour, as the sparks fly upward*, (or, as the vulture's chickens soar aloft, according to the Greek interpreters^c.)

5. Accordingly our condition and circumstances in the world are so ordered, as to require industry; so that without it we cannot support our life in any comfort or convenience; whence St. Paul's charge upon the Thessalonians, *that if any one would not work, neither should he eat*, 1st Thess. iii. is in a manner a general law imposed on mankind by the exigency of our state, according to that of Solomon; *The idle soul shall suffer hunger*, and, *The sluggard, who will not plough by reason of the cold, shall beg in harvest, and have nothing*. Prov. xix. 15. Prov. xx. 4.

Of all our many necessities, none can be supplied without pains, wherein all men are obliged to bear a share; every man is to work for his food, for his apparel, for all his accommodations, either immediately and directly, or by commutation and equivalence; for the gentleman himself cannot (at least worthily and inculpably) obtain them otherwise than by redeeming them from the ploughman and the artificer, by compensation of other cares and pains conducive to public good.

The wise Poet did observe well when he said,

—Pater ipse colendi

Hand facilem esse viam voluit. *Virgil. Georg. i.*

And St. Chrysostom doth propose the same observation,

^c 'Αλλ' ἀνθρώποις γινώσκει νόσος διὰ γυναιὸς ὑψηλὰ πίπτουσι. LXX. Interp. Now great travail (as the Son of Sirach faith) is created for every man; (ἀρχαία μεγάλη ἔκτισται παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, &c. Eccclus. xl. 1.) and a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, &c.

SERM. that God, to whet our mind ^f, and keep us from moping,
 L. would not that we should easily come by the fruits of the
 earth, without employing much art and many pains ; in
 order thereto there must be skill used in observing seasons,
 and preparing the ground ; there must be labour spent in
 manuring, in delving and ploughing, in sowing, in weed-
 ing, in fencing it ; there must be pains taken in reaping,
 in gathering, in laying up, in thrashing and dressing the
 fruit ere we can enjoy it ; so much industry is needful to
 get bread ; and if we list to fare more daintily, we must
 either hunt for it, using craft and toil to catch it out of
 the woods, the water, the air ; or we must carefully wait
 on those creatures, of which we would serve ourselves,
 feeding them that they may feed us ; such industry is re-
 quired to preserve mankind from starving. And to guard
 it from other inconveniences, mischiefs, and dangers sur-
 rounding us, it is no less requisite : for to shelter us from
 impressions of weather, we must spin, we must weave, we
 must build ; and in order thereto we must scrape into the
 bowels of the earth, to find our tools ; we must sweat at
 the anvil, to forge them for our use ; we must frame arms,
 to defend our safety and our store from the assaults of
 wild beasts, or of more dangerous neighbours, wild men.
 To furnish accommodations for our curiosity and pleasure,
 or to provide for the convenience and ornament of our
 life, still greater measures of industry are demanded ; to
 satisfy those intents, a thousand contrivances of art, a
 thousand ways of trade and business do serve, without
 which they are not attainable. In whatever condition any
 man is, in what state soever he be placed, whatsoever call-
 ing or way of life he doth embrace, some peculiar business
 is thence imposed on him, which he cannot with any ad-
 vantage or good success, with any grace, with any com-
 fort to himself, or satisfaction to others, manage without
 competent industry : nothing will go on of itself, without

^f Διὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ἀνάγκην κατεστεινὴν ἡ γυναιξὶς ὁ Θεός, &c. Chrys. in Act. Rom. 35.

—— curis acuens mortalia corda ;

Nec torpere gravi passus sua regna veterno. Virg. Georg. i.

our care to direct it; and our pains to hold it, and forward SERM.
L.
it in the right course: all which things shew that divine wisdom did intend that we should live in the exercise of industry, or not well without it; having so many needs to be supplied, so many desires to be appeased thereby; being exposed to so many troubles and difficulties, from which we cannot extricate ourselves without it. But farther yet,

6. Let us consider that industry hath annexed thereto, by divine appointment and promise, the fairest fruits, and the richest rewards: all good things (being either such in themselves, or made such by human esteem) are the fruits of industry; ordered to sprout from it, under the protection and influence of God's blessing, which commonly doth attend it.

All good things indeed are the gifts of God, and freely dispensed by his hand; but he doth not give them absolutely without condition, nor miraculously without concurrence of ordinary means: by supporting our active powers, and supplying needful aid to our endeavours; by directing and upholding us in the course of our action; by preventing or removing obstacles that might cross us; by granting that final success which dependeth on his pleasure, he doth confer them on us; our hand commonly is God's hand, by which he worketh good, and reacheth out benefits to us; governing and wielding it as he pleaseth.

God indeed could not well proceed otherwise in dispensing his favours to us; not well, I say; that is, not without subverting the method of things which himself hath established; not without slighting and voiding his own first bounty, or rendering the common gifts of nature (our reason, our senses, our active powers) vain and useless; not without making us incapable of any praise, or any reward^s, which suppose works achieved by our earnest endeavour; not without depriving us of that sweetest

Pr. xxxvii.
3, 23.
Prov. iii. 6.
Dii laboribus omnia
vendunt.
Judg. vi.
36. vii. 7.
2 Kings v.
2.
Joth. i. 17,
9.

^s Καί τινος ἡμῶν λαμβάνει τὸν μισθόν, εἰ τὸ πᾶν ἡμῶν ἴσμεν εἰς τοῦ Θεοῦ.
Chrys. in Eph. Orat. 2.

SERM. content, which springeth from enjoying the fruit of our
L. labour.

Hence it is, that whatever in holy Scripture is called the gift of God, is otherwhile affirmed to be the effect of industry; it being the useful condition upon which, and the instrument whereby divine Providence conveyeth good things to us^h: what God said to Joshua, doth imply the
Josh. i. 7. general method of his proceeding, *Only be thou strong and courageous—that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*

Hence whatever we are directed to pray for, we are also exhorted to work forⁱ; declaring thereby, that we are serious in our devotion, and do not mock God, asking that of him, which we deem not worth our pains to acquire. It was well said of Cato in Sallust, *Vigilando, agendo, bene consulendo, prospere omnia cedunt: ubi socordiae te atque ignaviae tradideris, nequicquam Deos implores; irati, infestique sunt.* We are bid to pray even for our daily bread, yet we may starve if we do not work for it; and in St. Paul's judgment deserve to do so.

Hence we are bound to thank God for all those things, for the want of which we must thank ourselves, and condemn our own sloth.

Hence, although we should cast our care on God, and rely on his providence, being solicitous for nothing; yet we must not so trust him, as to tempt him, by neglecting the means, which he doth offer, of relieving ourselves; to be presumptuously slothful being no less blameable, than to be distrustfully careful.

Hence God in all such cases, when we do need any good thing, is said to be our helper and succourer to the obtaining it; which doth imply that we must cooperate with him, and join our forces to those which he doth af-

^h Περὶ τοῦτο μᾶλλον ἡ ψυχὴ διακινεῖται, ὅτε ὡς ἱκανοὶ διὰ τούτου καὶ πόνους ἀνι-
μῶν ἐρετῇ οἰκισθῶσι αὐτῇ ταύτῃ βολόμενοι. Chrys. in Joh. Or. 36.

Διὰ τοῦτο ἐπὶ πάντων ἡμεῖς ἐκπαινεῖται, ἀλλ' ἀφ᾽ ἡμῶν εἶναι, ἵνα ἐντρέσωνται
λαβὼν πρόφασιν τῷ δικαίῳ ἡμᾶς σιφανῶν. Chrys. Tom. Or. 28.

ⁱ Αὐτός τι νῦν δεῶν, ὥστε τὸς θεὸς κάλει. Cato apud Sal. in bello Catil.

Τὰν χεῖρα ποτιφύροντα δὴ τὰν τύχαν ἐπικαλεῖν. Plut. Apoph. Lac.

ford; so that as we can do nothing without him, so he **SERM.**
 will do nothing without us; yea, so that sometime we are **L.**
 said also to help God; *Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly* **Judg. v. 23.**
the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help **Psal. lxxii.**
of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. **12. xxii. 11.**
 If ever God doth perform all without human labour con- **2 Cor. xii.**
 spiring, it is only in behalf of those who are ready to do **10.**
 their best, but unable to do any thing, being overpowered **2 Chron.**
 by the insuperable difficulty of things: but he never doth **xiv. 11.**
 act miracles, or control nature; he never doth stretch **1 Sam. xiv.**
 forth his arm, or interpose special power in favour of wil- **6.**
 ful and affected sluggards.

In fine, it is very plain both in common experience, declaring the course of providence, and in holy Scripture, expressing God's intention, that Almighty God doth hold forth all good things as the prizes and recompences of our vigilant care, and painful endeavour; as by surveying particulars we may clearly discern.

Nothing is more grateful to men, than *prosperous success* in their undertakings, whereby they attain their ends, satisfy their desires, save their pains, and come off with credit; this commonly is the effect of industry^k, (which commandeth fortune, to which all things submit and serve,) and scarce ever is found without it: an industrious person, who as such is not apt to attempt things impossible or unpracticable, can hardly fail of compassing his designs, because he will apply all means requisite, and bend all his forces thereto; striving to break through all difficulties, and to subdue all oppositions thwarting his purposes: but nothing of worth or weight can be achieved with half a mind, with a faint heart, with a lame endeavour: any enterprise undertaken without resolution, managed without care, prosecuted without vigour, will easily be dashed and prove abortive, ending in disappointment, damage, disgrace, and dissatisfaction: so the Wise Man doth assure us; *The soul, saith he, of the sluggard desireth*, **Prov. xiii. 4.**

^k Τῇ ἐπιμελείᾳ πάντα ὅλα γίνονται. *Antiph.*

Quodcūque imperavit sibi animus, obtinuit, &c. *Sen. de Ira*, ii. 12.

SERM. *and hath nothing ; but the soul of the diligent shall be*

L. *made fat : the one pineth away with ineffectual and fruitless desires ; the other thriveth upon satisfaction in prosperous success.*

Prov. xxi.
25.

Prov. xv.
30.

Pf. lxx. 9,
11.

Prov. xii.
11.

Prov. xxi.
5.

(deft in
LXX.)

Prov. xx.
4. xix. 15.

Plentiful accommodations for our sustenance and convenience all men will agree to be very desirable ; and these are indeed the blessings of him, who *visiteth the earth and enricheth it ; who crowneth the year with his goodness, and whose clouds drop fatness ;* but they are so dispensed by heaven, that industry must concur therewith in deriving them to us, and sloth will debar us of them ; for he, saith the holy Oracle, *that tilleth his land, shall be satisfied with bread ; and the thoughts of the diligent alone tend to plenteousness ; but the sluggard shall beg in harvest, and have nothing ; and the idle soul shall suffer hunger.*

Wealth is that, which generally men of all things are wont to affect and covet with most ardent desire, as the great storehouse of their needs and conveniences, the sure bulwark of their state and dignity ; the universal instrument of compassing their designs and pleasures ; and most evident it is, that in the natural course of things, industry is the way to acquire it, to secure it, to improve and enlarge it ; the which course pursued innocently and modestly, God will be so far from obstructing, that he will further and bless it ; for that indeed it would be a flaw in providence, if honest industry, using the means it affordeth, should fail of procuring a competency ; which joined with a pious contentedness, in St. Paul's computation, is *great wealth.* Wherefore although Solomon telleth us,

1 Tim. vi.
6.

Prov. xv.
16. x. 22.

xxii. 4.
2 Chron.

xxix. 12.
Ecclef. v.

19.
Prov. x. 4.

xiii. 11.
Ecclef. vi.

1, 2.
St. Paul ex-

horteth to
work with
our hands,

that the blessing of the Lord is that which maketh rich ; yet doth he not forget or contradict himself, when he also doth affirm, that the hand of the diligent maketh rich ; and that he who gathereth by labour shall increase ; because God blesseth the industrious, and by his own hand, as the most proper instrument, maketh him rich. When the Preacher said, There is a man to whom God hath given riches and wealth, he knew well enough what man it was, to whom God giveth them ; and that sluggards were not fit objects of that liberality : for he had observed it to be

their doom to be poor and beggarly, their nature to waste **SERM.**
and embezzle an estate: he could assure us, that *drowsiness* **L.**
shall clothe a man with rags; he could propound it as a ^{1st man}
certain observation, that *he who is slothful in his work, is* ^{xxix. 11.}
brother to a great waster; or that want of industry in our ^{1st Thef. iv.}
business will no less impair our estate, than prodigality it-
self; he could more than once warn the slothful, that if
he did *sleep on*, or persist in his sluggish way, indigency ^{Prov. x. 4.}
would surprise and seize on him with an insupportable vio-
lence: So, saith he, *shall thy poverty come as one that tra-* ^{Prov. vi. 11.}
velleth, and thy want as an armed man. ^{xxiv. 34.}

Another darling of human affection (and a jewel indeed
of considerable worth and use in our life) is honour, or re-
putation among men: this also plainly, after the common
reason and course of things, is purchased and preserved
by industry: for he that aspireth to worthy things, and
assayeth laudable designs, pursuing them steadily with se-
rious application of heart, and resolute activity, will rarely
fail of good success, and consequently will not miss ho-
nour, which ever doth crown victory; and if he should
hap to fail in his design, yet he will not lose his credit;
for having meant well, and done his best, all will be ready
to excuse, many to commend him; the very qualities
which industry doth exercise, and the effects which it doth ^{1st Chron.}
produce, to beget honour, as being ornaments of our per- ^{xxix. 11.}
son and state. God himself (from whom *honour cometh*, ^{Dan. v. 18.}
and whose special prerogative it is to bestow it, he, as ^{Ecclef. v.}
King of the world, being the fountain of honour) will be
concerned to dignify an industrious management of his
gifts with that natural and proper recompence thereof;
conducting him who fairly treadeth in the path of honour,
that he shall safely arrive unto it. It is therefore a matter
of easy observation, which the wise Prince doth prompt us
to mark; *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he* ^{Prov. xxii.}
shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean ^{19.}
men: that is, diligence, as it is the fairest, so it is the
surest way to the best preferment: as it qualifyeth a man
for employment, and rendereth him useful to the world,
so it will procure worthy employment for him, and attract

SERM. the world to him; as the same great author again doth
L. assert: *The hand, faith he, of the diligent shall bear rule;*

Prov. xii. yea, so honourable a thing is industry itself, that an exer-
24. cise thereof in the meanest rank is productive of esteem, as
Prov. xxvii. the Wise Man again doth observe and tell us; *He that*
18. *waiteth on his master* (that is, with diligence attendeth on
"Ος φυλάσσει τὸν ἑαυτοῦ τὴν ἐργασίαν, τιμῇ-
θήσεται. the business committed to him) *shall be honoured.*

No industrious man is contemptible; for he is ever
looked upon as being in a way of thriving, of working
himself out from any straits, of advancing himself into a
better condition. But without industry we cannot expect
any thing but disrespect, shame, and reproach, which are
the certain portion of the slothful; he not having the
heart to enterprize or the resolution and patience to achieve
any thing deserving regard, or apt to procure it; he want-
ing all the ornaments and good fruits that grow from in-
dustry; he being only fit for a fordid and servile condi-
tion; whence *the slothful*, faith Solomon, *shall be under*
Prov. xii. *tribute*; and, *He that sleepeth in harvest, is a son that*
24. *causeth shame*; he causeth it to his relations by his beg-
Δόλιος δὲ ἔσται ἐν
πρασείῃ. garly accoutrements, he causeth it much more to himself
Prov. x. 5. by his despicable faultiness, and by the disgraceful conse-
quences of it.

Another yet more precious good, far surpassing all ex-
ternal advantages of our state; the which in the judgment
of him who (together with it having a full possession of
all secular prosperity, wealth, dignity, and power) was
Prov. viii. best able to prize it, *is better than rubies, and incompara-*
11. iii. 14. *bly doth excel all things that may be desired*, as ennobling,
15. iv. 7. enriching, and embellishing our better part: wisdom, I
Job xxviii. mean, or a good comprehension, and right judgment about
16. matters of highest importance to us, is the prize of in-
dustry, and not to be gained without it; nature conferreth
little thereto¹, fortune contributeth much less; it cannot
be bought at any rate; *It cannot, faith Job, be gotten for*
Job xxviii. *gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof;*
15, 16. *it cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the pre-*

¹ Nec rude quid profit video ingenium. *Hor. de Arte Poet.*

sious onyx, or the sapphire; it is the offspring of watchful observation and experience, of serious meditation and study; of careful reflection on things, marking, comparing, and weighing their nature, their worth, their tendencies and consequences; these are needful to the getting of wisdom, because truth, which it seeketh, commonly doth not lie in the surface, obvious to a superficial glance, nor only dependeth on a simple consideration of few things; but is lodged deep in the bowels of things, and under a knotty complication of various matters; so that we must dig to come at it, and labour in unfolding it: nor is it an easy task to void the prejudices springing from inclination or temper, from education or custom, from passion and interest, which cloud the mind, and obstruct the attainment of wisdom.

If we will have it, we must get it as Solomon himself did, that great master of it. How was that? *I gave, saith he, my heart to know wisdom.* He who made it his option and choice before all things; who so earnestly and so happily did pray for it; upon whom it is so expressly said, that God in a special manner and plentiful measure did bestow it; who averreth God to be the sole donor of it, (for, *The Lord, saith he, giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding*;) yet even he did first give his heart to it, before it was given into his heart: he did not only gape for it, to receive it by mere infusion; but he worked and studied hard for it. He was indeed a great student, an inquisitive searcher into nature, a curious observer of the world, a profound considerer and comparer of things; and by that industrious course, promoted by divine blessing, he did arrive to that great stock of so renowned a wisdom.

And the same method it is which he prescribeth to us for getting it; exhorting us, that we *incline our ear unto wisdom, and apply our heart to understanding*; that we *cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice for understanding*; that we *seek her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures*; in following which course he doth assure us of good success; for *then, saith he, shalt thou under-*

SERM.
L.

Ecclef. i.
17. ii. 3.
1 Kings iii.
9. iv. 29.
Wisd. viii.
21. ix. 17.
Ecclef. ii.
26.
Jam. i. 5.
Prov. ii. 6.

Prov. ii. 2,
3, 4.

SERM. *stand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God;*

L. *which is the head or chief part of wisdom; and Blessed,*
 Prov. viii. *faith he again, in the person and place of wisdom itself, is*
 34, 35. *the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates,*
waiting at the posts of my doors; for he that findeth me,
findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. It is the
way he supposeth of finding wisdom, to watch assiduously,
to wait diligently upon the means of attaining her; and
 Prov. viii. *how infallible the acquit of her is thereby, she doth again*
 17. *by his mouth thus acquaint us; I love them that love*
 Wisd. vi. *me, and those that seek me early shall find me; and she,*
 12, 13, 14. *faith his imitator, is easily seen of them that love her, and*
found of such as seek her; who so seeketh her early, shall
have no great travel, for he shall find her sitting at his
doors.

This indeed is the only way; idleness is not capable of so rich and noble a purchase: a slothful person may be conceited, yea needs must be so; but he can never be wife: *A sluggard, faith Solomon, is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.* This conceit of wisdom is a natural issue of his ignorance; and it is indeed no small part of his folly, that he doth not perceive it; being no less stupid in reflection on his own mind, than in considering other matters: being always in a slumber, he will often fall into such pleasant dreams; and no wonder that he should presume upon abundance of knowledge, who not lifting to take any pains in the search or discussion of things, doth snatch the first appearances, doth embrace every suggestion of his fancy, every conceit gratifying his humour, for truth.

Prov. xxvi.
16.

What should I speak of learning, or the knowledge of various things, transcending vulgar apprehension? Who knoweth not that we cannot otherwise reach any part of that, than by assiduous study and contemplation? Who doth not find that all the power in the world is not able to command, nor all the wealth of the Indies to purchase, one notion? Who can be ignorant, that no wit alone, or strength of parts can suffice, without great industry, to frame any science, to learn any one tongue, to know the

history of nature, or of Providence? it is certainly by SERM.
Horace's method &, L.

Multa tulit, fecitque puer,——

by much exercise and endurance of pains, that any one can arrive to the mark of being learned or skilful in any sort of knowledge.

But farther yet, Virtue, the noblest endowment and richest possession whereof man is capable; the glory of our nature, the beauty of our soul, the goodliest ornament and the firmest support of our life^b; that also is the fruit and blessing of industry; that of all things most indispensably doth need and require it. It doth not grow in us by nature, nor befall us by fortune; for nature is so far from producing it, that it yieldeth mighty obstacles and resistances to its birth, there being in the best dispositions much averfeness from good, and great proneness to evil; fortune doth not further its acquits, but casteth in rubs and hindrances thereto, every condition presenting its allurements, or its affrightments from it; all things within us and about us conspire to render its production and its practice laborious.

It is ('tis true) a gift of heaven, and cannot be obtained without a special influence of divine grace; but it is given as children are, (of whom it is said, *Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward,*) not without fore travail and labour of the mother, not without grievous difficulty and pangs in the birth. In our conversion to embrace virtue God doth guide us; but to what? to sit still? No, to walk, to run in his ways: Grace doth move us, but whereto? to do nothing? No, but to stir, and act vigorously; *The holy Spirit doth help our infirmities*: but how could it help them, if we did not conjoin our best, though weak, endeavours with its operations? To what doth it *συναντιλαμβάνειν*, or *co-help* Psal. cxvii. 9.

Rom. viii.
26. *συναντι-
λαμβάνεται.*
Heb. xii. 4.
Rom. ii. 10.
Acts x. 35.

^a Qui cupit optatam cursu contingere metam,

Multa tulit, fecitque puer, sudavit et alsit. *Hor. de Art. Poet.*

^b Τῇ μὲν κακίᾳ ἥδονῃ, τῇ δὲ ἀρετῇ συγκαλλήσεται πόνος. *Chrys. in Joh. Or. 36.*

Κακία μὲν γὰρ αὐτοδιδασκτον δεῖται διὰ τὸν πόνον πρῶτα. *Sen. de Provid. 2.*

SERM. us, but to *strive against sin, to work righteousness, to per-*
 L. form duty with earnest intention of mind, and laborious activity? God, saith St. Chrysostom, *hath parted virtue with us, and neither hath left all to be in us, left we should be elated to pride, nor himself hath taken all, left we should decline to sloth*¹.

Indeed the very nature and essence of virtue doth consist in the most difficult and painful efforts of soul; in the extirpating rooted prejudices and notions from our understanding; in bending a stiff will, and rectifying crooked inclinations; in overruling a rebellious temper; in curbing eager and importunate appetites; in taming wild passions; in withstanding violent temptations; in surmounting many difficulties, and sustaining many troubles; in struggling with various unruly lusts within, and encountering many stout enemies abroad, which assault our reason, and *war against our soul*: in such exercises its very being lieth; its birth, its growth, its subsistence dependeth on them; so that from any discontinuance or remission of them it would soon decay, languish away, and perish.

What attention, what circumspection, and vigilancy of mind, what intention of spirit, what force of resolution, what command and care over ourselves doth it require, to keep our hearts from vain thoughts and evil desires; to guard our tongue from wanton, unjust, uncharitable discourse; to order our steps uprightly and steadily in all the paths of duty? Καὶ τί οὐκ ἐτίπονον τῶν τῆς ἀρετῆς; and what, as St. Chrysostom asketh, *of all things belonging to virtue is not laborious*? It is no small task to know it, wherein it consisteth, and what it demandeth of us; it is a far more painful thing to conform our practice unto its rules and dictates.

Chryf. in
Joh. Or. 36.

¹ Ἐμίστατο πρὸς ἡμᾶς τὴν ἀρετὴν ὁ Θεὸς, καὶ οὕτως ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἀφῆκε τὸ πᾶν ἔργον, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ἀπνοίαν καταρῶμεθα, οὐτε αὐτοὺς τὸ πᾶν ἔλαβεν, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ἠρημίας καταλινώμεν· ἀλλ', &c. Chryf. Tom. 5. Or. 28.

Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡ περὶ τὰ καλὰ τῶν ἀνδρῶν πονηρὴ ἰσχυρίσιν δίχα τῆς ἀνωδιν βουλήσιν τελειοῦνται· ἀλλ' ἡ ἀνωδιν χάρις ἐπὶ τοῖς μὴ σπουδαζομένοις παραγίνεται· εἰ, ἀλλ' ἑκάστη συγκατέσθαι προσήκει, σπουδὴν τε ἀνδραγαθίην, καὶ τὴν διὰ πίστεως ἀνωδιν κατήκουσιν συμμαχίαν εἰς τελείωσιν ἀρετῆς. Basf. Conf. Mon. cap. 15.

If travelling in a rough way¹; if climbing up a steep hill; if combating stern foes, and fighting sharp battles; if crossing the grain of our nature and desires; if continually holding a strict rein over all our parts and powers, be things of labour and trouble, then greatly such is the practice of virtue. SERM. L.

Indeed each virtue hath its peculiar difficulty, needing much labour to master it: *Faith* is called *ἔργον πίστεως*, the *work of faith*; and it is no such easy work, as may be imagined, to bring our hearts unto a thorough persuasion about truths crossing our sensual conceits, and controlling our peevish humours; unto a perfect submission of our understanding, and resignation of our will to whatever God teacheth or prescribeth; to a firm resolution of adhering to that profession, which exacteth of us so much pains, and exposeth us to so many troubles. 1 Thef. i. 3.
2 Thef. i. 11.
John vi. 29.

Charity is also a laborious exercise of many good works; and he that will practise it, must in divers ways labour hardly; he must labour in voiding from his soul many dispositions deeply radicated therein by nature, opinion, and custom; envy, frowardness, stubbornness, perverse and vain selfishness; from whence wrath, revenge, spite, and malice do spring forth. He must labour in effectual performance of all good offices, and in catching all occasions of doing good; he must exert that *κόπον ἀγάπης*, that *labour of love*, whereof St. Paul doth speak; he must (as that holy Apostle directeth, not only in precept, but by his own practice) work with his own hands, that he may supply the wants of his neighbour. Gal. vi. 10.
1 Thef. i. 3.
Heb. vi. 10.
Eph. iv. 28.
Acs xx. 35.

Hope itself (which one would think, when grounded well, should be a no less easy than pleasant duty) doth need much labour to preserve it safe, straight, and stable, among the many waves and billows of temptation assaying to shake and subvert it; whence a *patience of hope* is recommended to us; and we so often are exhorted to hold it fast, to keep it sure, firm, and unshaken to the end. Ἀκλινῇ.
Heb. x. 23.
Heb. vi. 19.
1 Thef. i. 3.
Heb. x. 36.
Heb. vi. 11.
Ἐνδύνασθαι
σπουδῇ.
Heb. iii. 6.
14.
2 Pet. i. 10.

¹ Τῆς ἀρετῆς ἰδρῶτα διὰ προπάρεσθαι Ἱησοῦν

Ἀθάνατον, μακρὸς τε καὶ ἡθελος ὁμος ἐπ' αὐτὴν,

καὶ σπινθήρ.

Heb. Ἐργ. α'.

SERM. Temperance also surely demandeth no small pains^m; it being no slight business to check our greedy appetites, to shun the enticements of pleasure, to escape the snares of company and example, to support the ill-will and reproaches of those zealots and bigots for vice, who cannot tolerate any nonconformity to their extravagances; but,
 1 Pet. iv. 4. as St. Peter doth express it, *think it strange, if others do not run with them to the same excess of riot, speaking ill of them for it.*

What should I speak of meekness, of patience, of humility, of contentedness? Is it not manifest how laborious those virtues are, and what pains are necessary in the obtaining, in the exercise of them? what pains, I say, they require in the avoidance of fond conceits, in the suppression of froward humours, in the quelling fierce passions, in the brooking grievous crosses and adversities, in the bearing heinous injuries and affronts?

Thus doth all virtue require much industry, and it therefore necessarily must itself be a great virtue, which is the mother, the nurse, the guardian of all virtues; yea, which indeed is an ingredient and constitutive part of every virtue; for if virtue were easily obtainable or practicable without a good measure of pains, how could it be virtue? what excellency could it have, what praise could it claim, what reward could it expect? God hath indeed made the best things not easily obtainable, hath set them high out of our reach, to exercise our industry in getting them, that we might raise up ourselves to them, that being obtained, they may the more deserve our esteem, and his reward.

Lastly, The sovereign good, the last scope of our actions, the top and sum of our desires, happiness itself, or eternal life in perfect rest, joy, and glory; although it be the supreme gift of God, and special boon of divine grace, (τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ, *But, saith St. Paul, the gift of God's grace is eternal life;*) yet it also by God himself is declared to be the result and reward of industry; for we are

^m Πάντος ἐξ ἰσὺς σώματος ὁμιῶνται, ὡς καλὸν μὲν ἡ σωφροσύνη τε καὶ δικαιοσύνη, χαλεπὸν μὲν τε καὶ ἐπίστανται. *Plat. de Rep. 2.*

commanded to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and to give diligence in making our calling and election sure, by virtuous practice; and God, saith St. Paul, will render to every man according to his works; to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; and, in the close of God's book, it is proclaimed, as a truth of greatest moment, and special point of God's will, *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.* It is plainly industry, which climbeth the holy mount; it is industry, which taketh the kingdom of heaven by force; it is industry, which so runneth as to obtain the prize, which so fighteth as to receive the crown, which so watcheth as to secure our everlasting interest to us.

Thus do the choicest good things, of which we are capable, spring from industry, or depend upon it; and no considerable good can be attained without it: thus all the gifts of God are by it conveyed to us, or are rendered in effect beneficial to us; for the gifts of nature are but capacities, which it improveth; the gifts of fortune or providence are but instruments, which it employeth to our use; the gifts of grace are the supports and succours of it; and the very gift of glory is its fruit and recompence.

There are farther several other material considerations and weighty motives to the practice of this duty, which meditation hath suggested to me: but these, in regard to your patience, must suffice at present; the other (together with an application proper to our condition and calling) being reserved to another occasion.

SERMON LI.

OF INDUSTRY IN GENERAL.

ECCLES. ix. 10.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.

SERM. LI. **INDUSTRY**, which the divine Preacher in this text commendeth to us, is a virtue of a very diffusive nature and influence; stretching itself through all our affairs, and twisting itself with every concern we have; so that no business can be well managed, no design accomplished, no good obtained without it: it therefore behoveth us to conceive a high opinion of it, and to inure our souls to the practice of it, upon all occasions: in furtherance of which purposes I formerly, not long since, did propound several motives and inducements; and now proceeding on, shall represent divers other considerations serviceable to the same end.

1. We may consider that industry is productive of ease itself, and preventive of trouble: it was no less solidly, than acutely and smartly advised by the philosopher Crates^a, *Whether, said he, labour be to be chosen, labour; or whether it be to be eschewed, labour, that thou mayest not labour; for by not labouring, labour is not escaped, but is rather pursued; and St. Chrysostom^b doth upon the same consideration urge industry, because Sloth, saith he, is wont*

^a Εἴς' αἰετὸν ὁ πόνος, πόνος εἴσι φικνὸν, πόνος, ἵνα μὴ ποιῇς διὰ γὰρ τοῦ μὴ πόνου οὐ φεύγεται πόνος, τῷ δὲ ἰσχυρίῳ ἔδωκεται. Crates, Ep. 4.

^b Ἡ ἀργία διαφθείρει ἡμᾶς ἰσχυρῶς, καὶ πολλὸν παρέχει τὸν πόνον. Chrys. in Joh. Orat. 36.

to spoil us, and to yield us much pain. No man can cozen SERM. LI. nature, escaping the labour to which he was born; but rather attempting it, will delude himself, then finding most, when he shunneth all labour.

Sloth indeed doth affect ease and quiet, but by affecting them doth lose them; it hateth labour and trouble, but by hating them doth incur them; it is a self-destroying vice, not suffering those who cherish it to be idle, but creating much work, and multiplying pains unto them; engaging them into divers necessities and straits, which they cannot support with ease, and out of which, without extreme trouble, they cannot extricate themselves: of this the Preacher doth afford us a plain instance; *By much slothfulness, saith he, the building decayeth, and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.* Eccles. i. 18. A little care taken at first about repairing the house, would have saved its decay and ruin, and consequently the vast charge and trouble, becoming needful to re-edify it: and the like doth happen in most other cases and occurrences of life: idleness commonly doth let slip opportunities and advantages, which cannot with ease be retrieved; it letteth things fall into a bad case, out of which they can hardly be recovered.

The certain consequences of it (disgrace, penury, want of experience, disobliging and losing friends, with all the like mischiefs) cannot be supported without much disquiet; and they disable a man from redressing the inconveniences into which he is plunged.

But industry, by a little voluntary labour taken in due place and season, doth save much necessary labour afterward, and by moderate care doth prevent intolerable distress; and the fruits of it (wealth, reputation, skill, and dexterity in affairs, friendships, all advantages of fortune) do enable a man to pass his life with great ease, comfort, and delight.

2. Industry doth begat ease, by procuring good habits, and facility of acting things expedient for us to do. By taking pains to-day we shall need less pains to-morrow; and by continuing the exercise, within a while we shall

SERM. need no pains at all, but perform the most difficult tasks
 LI. of duty, or of benefit to us, with perfect ease, yea commonly with great pleasure. What sluggish people account hard and irksome (as to rise early, to hold close to study or business, to bear some hardship) will be natural and sweet; as proceeding from another nature, raised in us by use.

Industry doth breed assurance and courage, needful for the undertaking and prosecution of all necessary business, or for the performance of all duties incumbent on us.

No man can quite decline business, or disengage himself from duty, without infinite damage and mischief accruing to himself: but these an industrious man (considing in this efficacious quality) will set upon with alacrity, and dispatch with facility, his diligence voiding obstacles, and smoothing the way to him; whereas idleness, finding some difficulties, and fancying more, soon dishearteneth, and causeth a man to desist from action, rather choosing to crouch under the burden, than by endeavour to carry it through, to discharge himself thereof: whence as to an industrious man things seeming difficult will prove easy, so to a slothful person the easiest things will appear impossible; according to Solomon's observation: *The way, saith he, of a slothful man is an hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is made plain*^c; whereas a slothful man, being apt to neglect his obligations, is opposed to an upright man, who hath a conscionable regard to them, and is willing to take pains in the discharge of them: so it is declared, that to the one the way is rough and thorny, to the other beaten and expedite.

And again, *The slothful man, saith he, doth say, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets*^d: he is very apt to conceit, or to pretend imaginary difficulties and hazards, and thence to be deterred from going about his

^c ἡ γὰρ. Prov. xv. 19. Ὅσα δὲ ἐργὰν ἐργαζέσθαι ἐκδέχεται, αἱ δὲ τῶν ἀνέμων ἐπισημαίνονται.

^d Prov. xxii. 13. xxvi. 13. Προφασίζονται, καὶ λέγουσιν ὅτι, φόβος ἐστὶ τοῦ λέοντος, ἐν δὲ ταῖς πλατείαις πορεύεται.

business, or doing his duty. This consideration St. Chrysostom doth propose, exciting to an earnest pursuit of virtue; because, *There is, saith he, nothing so easy, which our great sloth doth not represent very grievous and burdensome; nothing so painful and difficult, which diligence and willingness do not shew to be very easy*^c.

SERM.
LI.

3. We may consider that industry will sweeten all our enjoyments, and season them with a grateful relish; for as no man can well enjoy himself, or find sound content in any thing, while business or duty lie unfinished on his hand; so when he hath done his best toward the dispatch of his work, he will then comfortably take his ease, and enjoy his pleasure; then his food doth taste savourily, then his diversions and recreations have a lively gustfulness, then his sleep is very sound and pleasant, according to that of the Preacher, *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet*. Eccles. v. 12.
Τὸ ὑπνίσσειν.

4. Especially those accommodations prove most delightful, which our industry hath procured to us; we looking on them with a special tenderness of affection, as on the children of our endeavour; we being sensible at what costs of care and pain we did purchase them. 'If a man getteth wealth by fraud or violence, if he riseth to preferment by flattery, detraction, or any bad arts, he can never taste any good favour, or find sound comfort in them; and from what cometh merely by chance, as there is no commendation due, so much satisfaction will not arise. It is the Wise Man's observation, *The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting*, and therefore it cannot be very grateful to him; but, addeth he, *the substance of a diligent man is precious*; that is, what a man compasseth by honest industry, that he is apt highly to prize; he triumpheth in it, and (in St. Paul's sense innocently) Prov. xii. 27.
1 Cor. ix. 15.

^c Οὐδὲν αὐτὸς ἐστὶ βέλτιον, ἢ μὴ σφίγγει βαρὺ καὶ ἐπαχθὲς ὁ πολλὸς δαίτυσιν ὄντες ἡμῶν ὡς αὐτὸς ἐκρίσκει καὶ ἡ δουλεία, ἢ μὴ λίαν εὐχολοῖ ἢ σπουδῇ καὶ ἡ προθυμία. Chrys. tom. vi. Or. p. 13. 144.

Τὰ μὲν βέλτιστα τοῦ ἀμειλόμενου φεύγει, τὰ δὲ χαλκῶς ἐπιμιλίας ἐλίσσεται. Plut. de Educ.

^f Qui sit conditio dulcis sine pulvere palmæ? Hor. Ep. i. 1.

SERM. boasteth of it; he feeleth a solid pleasure and a pure
 LI. complacency therein: the manner of getting it doth more
 please him than the thing itself; as true hunters do love
 the sport more than the quarry, and generous warriors
 more rejoice in the victory than in the spoil; for *our soul*,
 as St. Chrysostom discourseth, *is more affected with those*
things, for which it hath laboured; for which reason, add-
 eth he, *God hath mixed labours with virtue itself, that he*
might endear it to us. Yea farther,

5. The very exercise of industry immediately in-itself
 is delightful, and hath an innate satisfaction, which tem-
 pereth all annoyances, and even ingratiateth the pains
 going with it.

The very settlement of our mind on fit objects, or its
 acquiescence in determinate action, conducing to a good
 end, whereby we are freed of doubt, distraction, and fasti-
 dious listlessness, doth minister content.

The reflection upon our having embraced a wise choice,
 our proceeding in a fair way, our being in chace of a good
 purpose, doth breed complacence.

To consider that we are spending our time accountably,
 and improving our talents to good advantage, (to the ser-
 vice of God, the benefit of our neighbour, the bettering
 of our own state,) is very cheering and comfortable.

Prov. xiv.
 23.

And whereas *in all labour*, as the Wise Man telleth us,
there is profit, the foresight of that profit affordeth plea-
 sure, the foretasting the good fruits of our industry is very
 delicious.

1 Cor. ix.
 10.
 Rom. xii.
 12. v. 2.
 Heb. iii. 6.
 1 Tim. iv.
 10.
 (Col. i. 5.
 2 Cor. iii.
 12.
 1 John iii.
 8.
 1 Pet. i. 3.
 Tit. ii. 13.)

Hope, indeed, doth ever wait on industry: and what is
 more delightful than hope? This is the incentive, the
 support, the condiment of all honest labour^b; in virtue
 whereof the husbandman toileth, the merchant trudgeth,
 the scholar ploddeth, the soldier dareth with alacrity and
 courage, not resenting any pains, not regarding any ha-
 zards, which attend their undertakings: this the holy apo-

ε Περὶ ταῦτα μᾶλλον ἡ ψυχὴ διακίνηται, ὡς ἐν ἡμαῖς διὰ τούτων ἡ πόσις ἀνέμει-
 νεται εὐκταῖσαι αὐτῇ ταύτης βολόμενος. Chrys. in Joh. Orat. 36.

^b — ipsa operis difficultate lætus spem fructus de labore meretur. Aug.
 Aug. Ep. 142.

files tell us did enable them with joy to sustain all their painful work and hazardous warfare; enjoining us also as to *work with fear, so to rejoice in hope.* SERM.
LI.

In fine, industry doth free us from great displeasure, by redeeming us from the molestations of idleness, which is the most tedious and irksome thing in the world, racking our soul with anxious suspense and perplexing distractionⁱ; starving it for want of satisfactory entertainment, or causing it to feed on its own heart by doleful considerations; infesting it with crowds of frivolous, melancholic, troublesome, stinging thoughts; galling it with a sense of our squandering away precious time, of our slipping fair opportunities, of our not using the abilities and advantages granted us, to any profit or fruit: whence St. Chrysostom saith very truly, that *there is nothing more unpleasant, more painful, more miserable, than a man that hath nothing to do: Is not this, saith he, worse than ten thousand chains, to hang in suspense, and be continually gaping, looking on those who are present^k?* Indeed the strictest imprisonment is far more tolerable, than being under restraint by a lazy humour from profitable employment: this enchaineth a man hand and foot, with more than iron fetters: this is beyond any imprisonment; it is the very entombment of a man, quite in effect sequestering him from the world, or debarring him from any valuable concerns therein. And if liberty be *ἐξουσία αὐτοπραγίας*, a power of doing what one liketh best; then is he, who by his sloth is disabled from doing any thing wherein he can find any reasonable satisfaction, the veriest slave that can be; from which slavery industry freeing us, and disposing us to perform cheerfully whatever is convenient, thereby doeth us a great pleasure. Farther,

6. Let us consider, that industry doth afford a lasting

ⁱ Otio qui nescit uti plus habet negotii, &c.

Otioso in otio animus nescit quid quidem velit, &c. *Ennius apud Agel.*
xix. 10.

^k Καὶ εἰ ἀνδρίζον γένει' ἂν ἀπορώσῃ ὅδιν ἔχοντος ποδῶν; εἰ μηχανήματα; εἰ κατασκευάσματα; πορτίον ἢ χεῖρας οὐτο δισμῶν, χαρμῶσδαι καὶ πικρήναι διαπαντός ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς καθεύδουσιν, ἔκοντα τοῖς παρόνταις; *Chrys. in AA. Or. 85.*

SERM. comfort, deposited in the memory and conscience of him
LI. that practiseth it. It will ever, upon his reviewing the

passages of his life, be sweet to him to behold in them testimonies and monuments of his diligence; it will please him to consider, that he hath lived to purpose, having done somewhat considerable; that he hath made an advantageous use of his time; that he hath well husbanded the talents committed to him; that he hath accomplished (in some measure) the intents of God's bounty, and made some return for his excellent gifts. What comfort, indeed, can any man have, yea, how sore remorse must he feel, in reflecting upon a life spent in unfruitful and unprofitable idleness? How can he otherwise than bewail his folly and baseness in having lived (or rather having only been) in vain; as the shadow and appearance of a man; in having lavished his days, in having buried his talents, in having embezzled his faculties of nature, and his advantages from Providence; in having defeated the good-will of God, and endeavoured no requital to the munificent goodness of his Maker, of his Preserver, his benign Lord and Master, his gracious Saviour and Redeemer? How, without confusion, can he in his mind revolve, that he hath nowise benefited the world, and profited his neighbour, or obliged his friends, or rendered to his country (to the society or community of which he is a member) amends for all the safety and quiet, the support, the convenience, and the pleasure he hath enjoyed under its protection, and in its bosom? that he hath not borne a competent share in the common burdens, or paid a due contribution of his care and labour to the public welfare? How can such a man look inward upon himself with a favourable eye, or pardon himself for so leathsome defaults?

7. Let us consider, that industry doth argue a generous and ingenuous complexion of soul.

It implieth a mind not content with mean and vulgar things, (such as nature dealeth to all, or fortune scattereth about,) but aspiring to things of high worth, and pursuing them in a brave way, with adventurous

*Diu fuit,
non diu
vixit.*

*Matt. xxv.
26.*

course, by its own forces, through difficulties and obstacles. SERM.
LI.

It signifyeth in a man a heart, not enduring to owe the sustenance or convenience of his life to the labour or the liberality of others; to pilfer a livelihood from the world; to reap the benefit of other men's care and toil, without rendering a full compensation, or outdoing his private obligations by considerable service and beneficence to the public.

A noble heart will disdain to subsist like a drone upon the honey gathered by others' labour; like a vermin to filch its food out of the public granary; or like a shark to prey on the lesser fry; but will one way or other earn his subsistence: for he that doth not earn, can hardly own his bread, as St. Paul implieth, when he saith, *Them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.* 1 Thess. iii.
12.
Τὸ λατρεῖν
ἀκρο.

Of this generous ingenuity we have a notable instance in that great Apostle himself; which he doth often represent as a pattern to us, professing much complacency therein. He with all right and reason might have challenged a comfortable subsistence from his disciples, in recompense for the incomparable benefits he did confer on them, and of the excessive pains he did endure for their good: this he knew well; but yet did rather choose to support himself by his own labour, than anywise to seem burdensome or troublesome to them: *These hands, said he, have ministered to my necessities, and to them that are with me. I have shewed you all things, that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.* 1 Cor. ix.
15.
2 Thess. iii.
9.
1 Cor. ix.
11.
1 Thess. ii.
6.
Acts xx.
34, 35.
xviii. 3.
1 Thess. ii.
9.
2 Thess. iii.
6.
1 Cor. iv.
12.
2 Cor. xi.
9, 23. This was the practice of him, who was in labours most abundant; and such is the genius of every man, who upon principles of conscience, reason, and honour, is industrious. Of him it may be said, as of Solomon's good housewife, *She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands; she is like the merchants' ship, she bringeth her food from afar; she looketh well to her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.* Prov. xxxi.
13, 14, 27.

SERM. Sloth is a base quality, the argument of a mind wretchedly degenerate and mean; which is content to grovel in a despicable state; which aimeth at no worthy thing, nor pursueth any thing in a laudable way; which disposeth a man to live *gratis* (precariously) and ingratfully on the public stock, as an insignificant cypher among men, as a burden of the earth, as a wen of any society; sucking aliment from it, but yielding no benefit or ornament thereto.

LI.

8. Industry is a fence to innocence and virtue; a bar to all kinds of sin and vice, guarding the avenues of our heart, keeping off the occasions and temptations to vicious practice. When a man is engaged in honest employment, and seriously intent thereon, his mind is prepossessed and filled, so that there is no room or vacancy for ill thoughts, or base designs, to creep in; his senses do not lie open to ensnaring objects; he wants leisure and opportunity of granting audience to the sollicitations of sinful pleasure; and is apt to answer them with a *non vacat*¹; the Devil can hardly find advantage of tempting him, at least many devils cannot get access to him, according to that observation in Cassian, *A working monk is assaulted by one devil, but an idle one is spoiled by numberless bad spirits*^m. The case of men ordinarily is like to that of Ægisthus,

—ne nil ageretur, amavit;

Ovid. de
Remed.

rather than do nothing, he was ready to do ill; he not having business to employ his thoughts, wanton desires did insinuate themselves into his heart, and transported him to that disastrous wickedness, which supplied matter to so many tragedies; and the like instance the sacred history suggesteth in King David, who, *walking*, it is said, *on the roof of his house*, his mind then roving, and being untacked from honest cares, that temptation seized on him, whereby he was plunged into that woful misdemeanour, which did create to him so much sorrow, did make such

2 Sam. xi.
2.

¹ Semper te diabolus inveniat occupatum. *Bern. Form. Hon.* v. cap. 7.

^m Operans monachus uno dæmone pulsatur, otiosus vero innumeris spiritibus devastatur. *Cass. de Instit.* x. 23.

a spot in his life, and leave such a blur on his memory ; S E R M. LI.
whence yet we may draw some benefit, taking it as a profitable document and warning, how idleness doth expose the best men to danger.

Idleness is indeed the nursery of sins, which as naturally grow up therein as weeds in a neglected field, or insects in a standing puddle ; *Idleness teacheth much evil.* It is Ecclus. xxxiii. 27. the general trap, whereby every tempter assaileth to catch our soul : for the mind being loose from care, Satan is ready to step in with his suggestions, the world presenteth its allurements, fleshly desires rise up ; proud, froward, wanton cogitations slip in ; ill company doth entice, ill example is regarded, every temptation doth object and impress itself with great advantage and force ; men in such a case being apt to close and comply with temptations, even to divert their mind, and entertain themselves, to cure their listlessness, to pass their timeⁿ, committing sin for want of better occupation. Hence in places where there is least work, the worst sins do most prevail ; and idleness therefore was by the Prophet reckoned one of the three great sins of Sodom, parents of the rest : *Behold, saith Ezekiel, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom ; pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her :* hence it seldom doth happen in any way of life, that a sluggard and a rakehell do not go together ; or that he who is idle is not also dissolute.

9. Particularly industry doth prevent the sins of vain curiosity, pragmatism, troublesome impertinency, and the like pests of common life, into which persons not diligently following their own business will assuredly fall. *We hear, saith St. Paul to the Thessalonians, that there are some who walk among you disorderly ; working not at all, but are busy-bodies^o.* It is no wonder, if they did not work at all, that they should walk disorderly ; or that

ⁿ ————— si non

Intendes animum studiis et rebus honestis,

Invidia vel amore vigil torquere —. Hor. Ep. i. 2.

^o 2 Theff. iii. 11. Μηδὲ ἰργαζομένους, ἀλλὰ περιιργαζομένους working nothing, but over-working.

SERM. quite neglecting their own concerns, they should *σιγασθαι*
 LI. *ἑσθαι*, over-work, or be too busy in matters not belonging to them, intruding themselves into the affairs of their neighbours: for there is a natural connection between these things, since every man must be thinking, must be doing, must be saying somewhat, to spend his leisure, to uphold conversation, to please himself, and gratify others, to appear somebody among his companions; to avoid the shame of being quite out of employment: wherefore not having the heart to mind his own affairs, he will take the boldness to meddle with the concerns of other men: if he cannot have the substance, he will set up an idol of business, and seem very active in his impertinency; in order thereto, being curiously inquisitive, and prying into the discourse, actions, and affairs of all men. This men are apt to do in their own defence: and besides, idleness doth put men into a loose, garish, wanton humour, disposing them without heed or regard to meddle with any thing, to prattle at any rate. In fine, whoever hath no work at home, will be gadding to seek entertainment abroad, like those gossips of whom St. Paul saith, *They learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.* If indeed we consider all the frivolous and petulant discourse, the impertinent chattings, the rash censures, the spiteful detractions which are so rife in the world, and so much poison all conversation, we shall find the main root of them to be a want of industry in men, or of diligent attendance on their own matters; which would so much take up their spirit and time, that they would have little heart or leisure to search into or comment upon other men's actions and concerns.

1 Tim. v.
13.

10. Let us consider that industry is needful in every condition and station, in every calling and way of life: in all relations, for our good behaviour, and right discharge of our duty in them. Without it we cannot in any state act decently, or usefully, either to the benefit and satisfaction of others, or to our own advantage and comfort.

Are we rich? Then is industry requisite for keeping

and securing our wealth, for managing it wisely, for employing it to its proper uses, and best advantages, (in the service of God, in beneficence to our neighbour, in advancing public good;) so that we may render a good account to him who hath entrusted us with the stewardship thereof: industry is very needful to guard us from the temptations and mischiefs to which wealth doth expose us, that it do not prove a treacherous snare, an unwieldy burden, a destructive poison and plague to us, throwing us into pride and vanity, into luxury, into stupidity, into distracting solicitude, into a base, worldly, and earthly temper of heart, into a profane oblivion of God, and of our own souls.

Are we in conspicuous rank of dignity, or in honour and repute among men? Then is industry requisite to keep us fast in that state, to hold us from tumbling from that pinnacle down into extreme disgrace; for then all eyes are upon us, strictly observing what we do, and ready to pass censure on our actions; so that great diligence is necessary to approve ourselves, and shun obloquy. Nothing is more brittle than honour; every little thing hitting on it, is able to break it, and therefore without exceeding care we cannot preserve it. Nothing is more variable or fickle than the opinions of men, (wherein honour consisteth;) it is therefore no easy matter to fix or detain them in the same place.

Honour cannot live without food or fuel; it must be nourished by worthy actions; without a continual supply of them, it will decay, languish, and pine away: industry therefore is required to keep it; and no less is necessary to use it well, in a due subordination to God's honour, and reference to his service, that, instead of an ornament and convenience, it do not prove a baneful mischief to us; puffing up our minds with vain conceits and complacencies, inclining us to arrogance and contempt of others, tempting us by assuming to ourselves to rob God of his due glory; to decline which evils great care is requisite; we must have a steady ballast, and we must hold the rudder warily, when we carry so great sail.

SERM.
LI.

Vitreæ facta.
ma. Hor.
Eccl. x. 1.

SERM. On the other hand, are we poor and low in the world;
LI. or do we lie under disgrace? Then do we much need industry to shun extremities of want and ignominy; that we be not swallowed up and overwhelmed by need or contempt; to support us under our pressures, to keep up our spirits from dejection and disconsolateness; to preserve us from impious discontentedness and impatience: industry is the only remedy of that condition, enabling us to get out of it; retrieving a competence of wealth or credit; or disposing us to bear it handsomely, and with comfort; so as not to become forlorn or abject wretches.

It is so needful to every condition; and it is so for all vocations; for,

Is a man a governor, or a superior in any capacity? Then what is he but a public servant, doomed to continual labour, hired for the wages of respect and pomp, to wait on his people; in providing for their needs, protecting their safety, preserving their peace and welfare: where is he but on a stage, whereon he cannot well act his part, without vigilant attendance to his charge, and constant activity in performing all the functions thereof? He is engaged in great obligations and necessities of using extreme diligence, both in regard to himself and others. Homer's description of a prince is a good one; *One who hath much people, and many cares committed to him:*

Ὁ λαὸς τ' ἐπιτετράφεται, καὶ τόσσα μέμλε.

He must watchfully look to his own steps, who is to guide others by his authority and his example. All his actions require special conduct, not only his own credit and interest, but the common welfare depending thereon. He must heedfully advise what to do, he must diligently execute what he resolveth on. He hath the most ticklish things that can be (the rights and interests, the opinions and humours of men) to manage. He hath his own affections to curb and guide, that they be not perverted by any sinister respects, not swayed by any unjust partiality, not corrupted by flattery or fear. He will find, that to wield power innocently, to brandish the sword of justice

discreetly and worthily, for the maintenance of right, and encouragement of virtue, for the suppression of injury, and correction of vice, is a matter of no small skill or slight care.

SERM.
LI.

Industry is indeed a quality most proper for persons of high rank and dignity, or of great power and authority; who have special opportunities to employ it in weighty affairs to great advantage; whose undertakings being of vast moment, do need answerable efforts to move and guide them. The industry of a mechanic, or a rustic, acting in a low and narrow sphere, can effect no great matter, and therefore itself need not to be great: but the industry of a prince, of a nobleman, of a gentleman, may have a large and potent influence, so as to render a nation, a country, a town, happy, prosperous, glorious, flourishing in peace, in plenty, in virtue; it therefore for achieving such purposes need be, and should be proportionably great; a small power not being able to move a great weight, nor a weak cause to produce a mighty effect. Wherefore Cicero recommending Pompey for a public charge, doth reckon these to be the *imperatoriae virtutes*, qualities befitting a prince, or general, wherein he did excel, *Labor in business, valour in dangers, industry in acting, nimbleness in performance, counsel in providing*.—And Alexander the Great, reflecting on his friends degenerating into sloth and luxury, told them, that it was a most slavish thing to luxuriate, and a most royal thing to labour.

And for those who move in a lower orb of subjection or service, I need not shew how needful industry is for them. Who knoweth not that to be a good subject, doth exact a careful regard to the commands of superiors, and a painful diligence in observing them? that to make a good servant, fidelity and diligence must concur? whereof the first doth suppose the last, it being a part of honesty

¹ Labor in negotio, fortitudo in periculis, industria in agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, consilium in providendo, &c. Cic. pro lege Manil.

² Ἡ ἀριστερία ἐστὶ τὸ ἀνυπαρξάν, βασιλικώτατον δὲ τὸ ποιεῖν. Plut. in Alex. p. 186a.

SERM. in a servant to be diligent; whence δούλος πονηρὸς καὶ ἐνερπὸς,
 II. *O thou wicked and slothful servant*, were in the Gospel
 Matt. xxv. well coupled; and the first epithet was grounded on the
 26. second, he being therefore wicked, because he had been
 slothful.

Neither can a man be a true friend, or a good neighbour, or anywise a good relative, without industry disposing him to undergo pains in performing good offices, whenever need doth require, or occasion invite.

In fine, it is palpable, that there is no calling of any sort, from the sceptre to the spade, the management whereof with any good success, any credit, any satisfaction, doth not demand much work of the head, or of the hand, or of both.

If wit or wisdom be the head, if honesty be the heart, industry is the right hand of every vocation; without which the shrewdest insight and the best intention can execute nothing.

A sluggard is qualified for no office, no calling, no station among men; he is a mere nobody, taking up room, pestering and clogging the world.

II. It also may deserve our consideration, that it is industry, whereto the public state of the world, and of each commonweal therein, is indebted for its being, in all conveniences and embellishments belonging to life, advanced above rude and fordid barbarism; yea, whereto mankind doth owe all that good learning, that morality, those improvements of soul, which elevate us beyond brutes.

To industrious study is to be ascribed the invention and perfection of all those arts whereby human life is civilized, and the world cultivated with numberless accommodations, ornaments, and beauties.

All the comely, the stately, the pleasant, and useful works which we do view with delight, or enjoy with comfort, industry did contrive them, industry did frame them.

Industry reared those magnificent fabrics, and those commodious houses; it formed those goodly pictures and statues; it raised those convenient causeways, those bridges, those aqueducts; it planted those fine gardens with vari-

ous flowers and fruits; it clothed those pleasant fields with corn and grass; it built those ships, whereby we plough the seas, reaping the commodities of foreign regions. It hath subjected all creatures to our command and service, enabling us to subdue the fiercest, to catch the wildest, to render the gentler sort most tractable and useful to us. It taught us from the wool of the sheep, from the hair of the goat, from the labours of the silkworm, to weave us clothes to keep us warm, to make us fine and gay. It helped us from the inmost bowels of the earth to fetch divers needful tools and utensils.

SERM.
LI.

It collected mankind into cities, and compacted them into orderly societies, and devised wholesome laws, under shelter whereof we enjoy safety and peace, wealth and plenty, mutual succour and defence, sweet conversation and beneficial commerce.

It by meditation did invent all those sciences whereby our minds are enriched and enabled, our manners are refined and polished, our curiosity is satisfied, our life is benefited.

What is there which we admire, or wherein we delight, that pleaseth our mind, or gratifieth our sense, for the which we are not beholden to industry.

Doth any country flourish in wealth, in grandeur, in prosperity? It must be imputed to industry, to the industry of its governors settling good order, to the industry of its people following profitable occupations: so did Cato, in that notable oration of his in Sallust, tell the Roman senate, that it was not by the force of their arms, but by the industry of their ancestors, that commonwealth did arise to such a pitch of greatness. When sloth creepeth in, then all things corrupt and decay; then the public state doth sink into disorder, penury, and a disgraceful condition.

Cat. apud
Sallust. in
bello Catil.

12. Industry is commended to us by all sorts of examples, deserving our regard and imitation. All nature is a

Ut variis usus meditando extunderet artes
Paulinus, &c.

Virg. Georg. i.

SERM. copy thereof, and the whole world a glass, wherein we
 LI. may behold this duty represented to us.

We may easily observe every creature about us incessantly working toward the end for which it was designed, indefatigably exercising the powers with which it is endowed, diligently observing the laws of its creation. Even beings void of reason, of sense, of life itself, do suggest unto us resemblances of industry; they being set in continual action toward the effecting reasonable purposes, conducing to the preservation of their own beings, or to the furtherance of common good.

The heavens do roll about with unwearied motion; the sun and stars do perpetually dart their influences; the earth is ever labouring in the birth and nourishment of plants; the plants are drawing sap, and sprouting out fruits and seeds, to feed us and propagate themselves; the rivers are running, the seas are tossing, the winds are blustering, to keep the elements sweet in which we live.

Prov. vi. 6,
&c.

Solomon sendeth us to the ant, and biddeth us to *consider her ways*, which *provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest*. Many such instructors we may find in nature; the like industrious providence we may observe in every living creature; we may see this running about, that swimming, another flying in purveyance of its food and support.

If we look up higher to rational and intelligent natures, still more noble and apposite patterns do object themselves to us.

Here below every field, every shop, every street, the hall, the exchange, the court itself (all full of business, and fraught with the fruits of industry) do mind us how necessary industry is to us.

If we consult history, we shall there find, that the best men have been most industrious; that all great persons, renowned for heroical goodness, (the worthy Patriarchs, the holy Prophets, the blessed Apostles,) were for this most commendable; that, neglecting their private ease, they did undertake difficult enterprises, they did undergo painful labours for the benefit of mankind; they did pass

their days, like St. Paul, *ἐν κόποις καὶ μόχθοις*, in labours SERM. LI.
and *toil/some pains*, for those purposes.

Our great example, the life of our blessed Lord himself, 2 Cor. xi. 27.
what was it but one continual exercise of labour? His 27.
mind did ever stand bent in careful attention, studying to Acts x.
do good. His body was ever moving in wearisome travel
to the same divine intent.

If we yet soar farther in our meditation to the superior
regions, we shall there find the blessed inhabitants of hea-
ven, the courtiers and ministers of God, very busy and
active; they do vigilantly wait on God's throne² in rea-
diness to receive and to dispatch his commands; they are
ever on the wing, and fly about like lightning *to do his* Psal. ciii.
pleasure. They are attentive to our needs, and ever ready 21, 22.
to protect, to assist, to relieve us! Especially, they are di- xxxiv. 7.
ligent guardians and succourers of good men; *officious* xci. 11.
spirits, sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation:
so even the seat of perfect rest is no place of idleness.

Yea, God himself, although immovably and infinitely
happy, is yet immensely careful, and everlastingly busy:
he rested once from that great work of creation; but yet Gen. ii. 2.
My Father, saith our Lord, *worketh still*; and he never John v. 17.
will rest from his works of providence and of grace. His Psal. cxli.
eyes continue watchful over the world, and his hands 3. cxxvii. 1.
stretched out in upholding it. He hath a singular regard Zech. iv.
to every creature, supplying the needs of each, and *satis-* 10.
fying the desires of all. 2 Chron. xvi. 9.
Psal. cxlv. 15, 16.

And shall we alone be idle, while all things are so
busy? Shall we keep our hands in our bosom, or stretch
ourselves on our beds of laziness, while all the world
about us is hard at work in pursuing the designs of its
creation? Shall we be wanting to ourselves, while so
many things labour for our benefit? Shall not such a
cloud of examples stir us to some industry? Not to com-
ply with so universal a practice, to cross all the world, to

• Σὴ δὲ θεῶν πρῶτον παρῆναι πολέμοις
Ἁγγέλων.— Orph.

• O te bone omnipotens, qui sic curas unumquemque nostrum tanquam
solum cures, et sic omnes tanquam singulos. *Aug. Conf. iv. 11.*

SERM. disagree with every creature, is it not very monstrous
 LI. and extravagant?

I should close all this discourse with that, at which, in pitching on this subject, I chiefly did aim, an application exhortatory to ourselves, urging the practice of this virtue by considerations peculiar to us as scholars, and derived from the nature of our calling. But the doing this requiring a larger discourse than the time now will allow, I shall reserve to another occasion; adding only one consideration more.

13. Lastly, if we consider, we shall find the root and source of all the inconveniences, the mischiefs, the wants of which we are so apt to complain, to be our sloth; and that there is hardly any of them, which commonly we might not easily prevent or remove by industry. Why is any man a beggar, why contemptible, why ignorant, why vicious, why miserable? Why, but for this one reason, because he is slothful; because he will not labour to rid himself of those evils? What could we want, if we would but take the pains to seek it, either by our industry, or by our devotion? For where the first will not do, the second cannot fail to procure any good thing from him, who giveth *to all men liberally*, and hath promised to supply the defect of our ability by his free bounty; so that if we join these two industries (industrious action, and industrious prayer) there is nothing in the world so good, or so great, of which, if we are capable, we may not assuredly become masters: and even for industry itself, especially in the performance of all our duties toward God, let us industriously pray: even so, *The God of peace sanctify us wholly, and make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is wellpleasing in his sight; through our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.* Amen.

Jam. i. 5.

Δίνεις ἐργασίαν.

Jam. v. 16.

Προσκαρτερήσθε.

Eph. vi. 18.

Rom. xiii.

12.

Col. iv. 2.

1 Thess. v.

23.

Heb. xiii.

21.

SERMON LII.

OF INDUSTRY IN OUR GENERAL CALLING,
AS CHRISTIANS.

ROM. xii. 11.

Not slothful in business.^a

INDUSTRY is a very eminent virtue, being an ingredient, or the parent, of all other virtues, of constant use upon all occasions, and having influence upon all our affairs. SERM. LII.

For it is in our nature framed; all our powers of soul and body being fitted for it, tending to it, requiring it for their preservation and perfection.

We were designed for it in our first happy state; and upon our lapse thence were farther doomed to it, as the sole remedy of our needs and the inconveniences to which we became exposed. For,

Without it we cannot well sustain or secure our life in the enjoyment of any comfort or convenience; we must work to earn our food, our clothing, our shelter; and to supply every indigency of accommodations, which our nature doth crave.

To it God hath annexed the best and most desirable rewards; success to our undertakings, wealth; honour; wisdom, virtue, salvation; all which, as they flow from God's bounty, and depend on his blessing; so from them

^a Τὴν ἐργασίαν μὴ ἀπολείπει. Sollicitudine non pigri. Vulg.

SERM. they are usually conveyed to us through our industry, as
LII. the ordinary channel and instrument of attaining them.

It is requisite to us, even for procuring ease, and preventing a necessity of immoderate labour.

It is in itself sweet and satisfactory; as freeing our mind from distraction, and wrecking irresolution; as feeding us with good hope, and yielding a foretaste of its good fruits.

It furnisheth us with courage to attempt, and resolution to achieve things needful, worthy of us, and profitable to us.

It is attended with a good conscience, and cheerful reflections, of having well spent our time, and employed our talents to good advantage.

It sweeteneth our enjoyments, and seasoneth our attainments with a delightful relish.

It is the guard of innocence, and barreth out temptations to vice, to wantonness, to vain curiosity, and pragmatism.

It argueth an ingenuous and generous disposition of soul; aspiring to worthy things, and pursuing them in the fairest way; disdaining to enjoy the common benefits; or the fruits of other men's labour, without deserving them from the world, and requiting it for them.

It is necessary for every condition and station, for every calling, for every relation; no man without it being able to deport himself well in any state, to manage any business, to discharge any sort of duty.

To it the world is indebted for all the culture, which advanceth it above rude and sordid barbarism; for whatever in common life is stately, or comely, or useful, industry hath contrived it, industry hath composed and framed it.

It is recommended to us by all sort of patterns considerable; for all nature is continually busy and active in tendency toward its proper designs; heaven and earth do work in incessant motion; every living creature is employed in propping for its sustenance; the blessed spirits are always on the wing in dispatching the commands of

God, and ministering succour to us; God himself is ever watchful, and ever busy in preserving the world, and providing for the needs of every creature. SERM.
LII.

The lives of our blessed Saviour, of all the Patriarchs, the Prophets; the Apostles, the Saints, in this respect have been more exemplary; no virtue being more conspicuous in their practice than industry in performing the hard duties and painful tasks imposed on them for the service of God, and the benefit of mankind.

Such is the virtue upon which I have formerly discoursed in general and at large; but shall now more specially consider, according to St. Paul's prescription, in reference to its most proper matter, *business*, explaining and pressing it accordingly.

Be not *slothful in business*, (that is, in discharge of it,) or *to business*, (that is, to undertake it:) this is the rule; the nature and needfulness whereof we shall declare.

By *σπουδή*, *business*, we may understand any object of our care and endeavours which doth require them, and may deserve them; which by reason of its difficulty cannot well be accomplished or attained without them; and which is productive of some fruit or recompense answerable to them; the which hath *operæ causam*, a need of labour, and *operæ pretium*, some effect worth our pains: if it be not such, it is not a due matter of virtuous and laudable industry.

There are many things, about which men with great earnestness employ themselves, called business, but not deserving that name: there are divers spurious kinds of industry, which may not pretend to commendation, but rather do merit blame; according to that of St. Chrysostom, *Labour which hath no profit, cannot obtain any praise*^b.

There is a *κενοσπουδία*, a vain industry, and a *κακοσπουδία*, a naughty industry, both agreeing with genuine virtuous industry in the act, as implying careful and painful acti-

^b Πῶτος οὐδὲν κέρδιον ἔχον, ἢ γνησίου πλεονέκτητος ἀποστερημένον. Chrysost. tom. v. Orat. 64.

SERM. vity, but discording from it in object and design; and con-
LII. sequently in worth and moral esteem.

Aliud agere, to be impertinently busy, doing that which conduceth to no good purpose, is in some respect worse than to do nothing, or to forbear all action; for it is a positive abuse of our faculties, and trifling with God's gifts; it is a throwing away labour and care, things valuable in themselves; it is often a running out of the way, which is worse than standing still; it is a debasing our reason, and declining from our manhood, nothing being more foolish or childish, than to be solicitous and serious about trifles: for who are more busy and active than children? who are fuller of thoughts and designs, or more eager in prosecution of them, than they? But all is about ridiculous toys, the shadows of business, suggested to them by apish curiosity and imitation. Of such industry we may understand that of the Preacher, *The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them*; for that a man soon will be weary of that labour, which yieldeth no profit, or beneficial return.

Ecclef. x.
15.

But there is another industry worse than that, when men are very busy in devising and compassing mischiefs; an industry whereof the Devil affordeth a great instance; for the cursed fiend is very diligent, ever watching for occasions to supplant us, ever plotting methods and means to do harm, ever driving on his mischievous designs with unwearied activity; *going to and fro in the earth; running about as a roaring lion, looking for prey, and seeking whom he may devour.*

Luke xxii.
31.
2 Cor. ii. 11.

Job i. 7.
1 Pet. v. 8.

And his wicked brood are commonly like him, being

ἢ ἄλλῃ γὰρ ὅτι φιλοπονεῖ τὸν κινέσπουδον ἐρίζουσι ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις ὅσα πολλὰίσι, ἢ τῶν τὸν μὴν εἰς ἀναφιλῆ ποιεῖν, ἢ ἀδιαφόρου, τὸν δὲ ἵνα καὶ τῶν συμφερόντων ἢ λυσιστῶν. *Plut. de Commun. Not. p. 1949. edit. Steph.*

Σπουδάζειν καὶ ποιεῖν παιδῶς χάριν ἡλπίδι φαίνεται καὶ λέγει παρὰ τὸν. *Arist. Eth. x. 6.*

ἢ ἐπὶ μικροῖς σπουδῇ μίμψιν φέρεται. *Plut. ibid.*

Vid. de Glor. Ath. p. 621.

Οἱ σπουδάζοντες ἐν τοῖς γυλίοις, ἐν τοῖς σπουδαίοις ἴσονται καταγίλασθαι. *Cal. Maj. apud Plut. in Apoph.*

workers of iniquity^d, οὐ κοινῶς, painful men, οἱ πονηροί, SERM. men that will do all things; who will spare no pains, nor LII. leave any stone unturned, for satisfying their lusts, and Psal. vi. 8. accomplishing their bad designs.

So indeed it is, that as no great good, so neither can any great mischief be effected without much pains; and if we consider either the characters or the practices of those, who have been famous mischief-doers, the pests of ^{Catiline, Marius, Stilico, Cæsar, &c.} mankind and disturbers of the world, we shall find them to have been no sluggards.

These two sorts of vain and bad industry the Prophet Isaiah seemeth to describe in those words; *They hatch cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web*; of which expressions one may denote mischievous, the other frivolous diligence in contrivance or execution of naughty or vain designs; and to them both that of the Prophet Hosea may be referred; *They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind*; guilt, remorse, and punishment being the consequences of both. And of them both common experience doth afford very frequent and obvious instances, a great part of human life being taken up with them. For,

How assiduously intent and eager may we observe men to be at sports! How soon will they rise to go forth to them! With what constancy and patience will they toil in them all the day! How indefatigable are they in riding and running about after a dog or a hawk, to catch a poor beast or silly bird!

How long will men sit poring on their games, dispensing with their food and sleep for it.

How long and serious attention will men yield to a wanton play! How many hours will they contentedly sit thereat! What study will men employ on jests and impertinent wit! How earnest will they be to satisfy their vain curiosity!

^d Εργάται τῆς ἀδικίας. Luke xiii. 27.

* Συνέχουσι γὰρ οἱ φιλέλευθε νόστους ἡμέρας αἰετοὶ καὶ ἀποστοὶ, καὶ ἡδονῆς ἡδονῆς σιγῆς. Lib. Orat. 31.

44 Of Industry in our general Calling, as Christians.

SERM. How in such cases do men forget what they are doing,
 LII. that sport should be sport^f, not work ; to divert and relax
 us, not to employ and busy us ; to take off our minds a
 little, not wholly to take them up ; not to exhaust or tire
 our spirits, but to refresh and cheer them, that they may
 become more fit for grave and serious occupations !

Jer. ii. 19. How painful will others be *in hewing them out cisterns,*
broken cisterns, that will hold no water ; that is, in immo-
 derate pursuit of worldly designs ! How studiously will
 they plod, how restlessly will they trudge, what carking
 and drudgery will they endure in driving on projects of
 ambition and avarice ! What will not they gladly do or
 suffer, to get a little preferment, or a little profit ! It was
 a common practice of old, and sure the world is not
 Pfal. xxxix. greatly mended since the Psalmist did thus reflect, *Surely*
 6. *every man walketh in a vain shew ; surely they are disqui-*
eted in vain : he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who
shall gather them.

How many vigilant and stout pursuers are there of sen-
 suality and riotous excess ; such as those of whom the
 Isa. v. 11. Prophet speaketh, *Wo unto them that rise up early in the*
morning, that they may follow strong drink ; that continue
until night, till wine inflame them !

How busy (O shame, O misery ! how fiercely busy) are
 some in accomplishing designs of malice and revenge !
 How intent are some to overreach, to circumvent, to sup-
 plant their neighbour ! How sore pains will some take
 to seduce, corrupt, or debauch others ! How active will
 some be in sowing strifes, in raising factions, in fomenting
 disorders in the world ! How many industrious slaves hath
 the Devil^h, who will spare no pains about any kind of
 work, which he putteth them to ! How many like those
 of whom the Wise Man saith, *Their feet run to evil, and*
 Prov. i. 16. *are swift in running to mischief : they sleep not, except*
 vi. 18. *they have done mischief ; and their sleep is taken away, un-*
 iv. 16. *less they cause some to fall !*

^f Τὴ γὰρ ὅτι παίζοντα διὰ παίζου. Plut.

^h Ἐπειδὴ οὐκ εἶναι ὁ διάβολος ἰσχυρὰ, πῶς ἰσχυρὰ, πῶς ἰμμεροῦσα, &c. Chrys.
 Ἀποκ. 19.

Now with all these labourers we may well expostulate **SERM.**
in the words of the Prophet; *Wherefore do ye spend money* **LII.**
for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which **Isa. lv. 2.**
satisfieth not?

Such labours are unworthy of men, much less do they
becom Christians.

It becometh us not as rational creatures to employ the
excellent gifts of our nature, and noble faculties of our
high-born soul, the forces of our mind, the advantages of
our fortune, our precious time, our very care and labour,
vainly or unprofitably upon any thing base or mean: being
that our reason is capable of achieving great and worthy
things, we must debase it by stooping to regard toys, we
do extremely abuse it by working mischief.

Much more doth it misbecome us as Christians (that is,
persons devoted to so high a calling, who have so worthy
employments assigned to us, so glorious hopes, so rich en- **Eph. i. 16.**
couragements proposed to us for our work) to spend our
thoughts and endeavours on things impertinent to our
great design, or mainly thwarting it.

The proper matter and object of our industry (those
false ones being excluded) is true business; or that which
is incumbent on a man to do, either in way of duty, being
required by God, or by dictate of reason, as conducing to
some good purpose; so that in effect it will turn to ac-
count, and finally in advantageous return will pay him
for his labour of mind or body; that which the Wise
Man did intend, when he advised, *Whatever thy hand* **Eccles. ix.**
findeth to do, do it with all thy might; whatever thy hand **10.**
*findeth, that is, whatever by divine appointment, (by the
command or providence of God,) or which, upon rational
deliberation, doth occur as matter of our action; com-
prising every good purpose and reasonable undertaking in-
cident to us.*

But our business, according to the holy Apostle's intent,
may be supposed especially to be the work of our calling;
to which each man hath a peculiar obligation; and which
therefore is most properly his business, or *ἡ σπουδή* empha-
tically, the business allotted to him.

SERM. Now this business, our calling, is double; our general
 LH. calling, which is common to us all as Christians, and our
 particular calling, which peculiarly belongeth to us, as
 placed in a certain station, either in the church or state.
 In both which vocations that we are much obliged and
 concerned to be industrious, shall be now my business to
 declare.

I. As to our general calling, (that *fulltime*, that *heavenly*, that *holy* vocation^b;) in which by divine grace, according to the evangelical dispensation, we are engaged, that necessarily requireth and most highly deserveth from us a great measure of industry; the nature and design of it requireth, the fruit and result of it deserveth our utmost diligence; all sloth is inconsistent with discharging the duties, with enjoying the hopes, with obtaining the benefits thereof. For,

It is a state of continual work, and is expressed in terms importing abundant, incessant, intense care and pain; for
 Phil. ii. 12. to be indeed Christians, *We must work out our salvation*
 Rom. ii. 7. *with fear and trembling; we must by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality.*
 Col. i. 10. *We must walk worthy of the Lord, to all wellpleasing,*
 1 Tim. vi. 18. *being fruitful in every good work. We must be rich in*
 Phil. i. 11. *good works, and filled with the fruits of righteousness,*
 (John xv. 3, 8, 16.) *which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God.*
 Jam. iii. 17. *We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto*
 Eph. ii. 10. *good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

1 Theff. v. 9. We have a soul to save, and are appointed *εἰς περισσώσαι σωτηρίας*, to make an acquit of salvation.

We have a mind to improve with virtue and wisdom, qualifying us for entrance into heaven, for enjoyment of God's favour, for conversation with angels.

1 Theff. i. 9. As Christians we are assumed to be servants of God, and readmitted into his family, from which for our dissol-
 Rom. vii. 6. vi. 22. alty we had been discarded; so that as he was our na-
 Eph. ii. 19.

^b ἡ ἀνω κλήσις. Phil. iii. 14. Κλήσις ἐπουράνιος. Heb. iii. 1. Ἀγία κλήσις.
 2 Tim. i. 9. (Eph. i. 18. 2 Theff. i. 11.)

tural Lord, so he is now such also by special grace; who did make us, who doth maintain us, under whose protection and at whose disposal we subsist; whence we are obliged to be faithfully diligent in his service; we must constantly wait upon him in devotional addresses; we must carefully study to know his pleasure; we must endeavour exactly to perform his will, and obey his commands; we must strive to advance his glory, to promote his interest, to improve all talents and advantages committed to us for those purposes; we must, as St. Paul expresseth it, *always abound in the work of the Lord.*

We must also look upon ourselves as servants of Christ our Redeemer; who by his blood hath purchased us to himself, that we might be *zealous of good works*; performing a service to him, which consisteth in a faithful discharge of manifold duties, and in pursuance of all virtue; with most intent application of mind, with expedite promptitude, with accurate circumspection; *giving all diligence*, as St. Peter speaketh, in *adding one virtue to another*; *being ready*, as St. Paul saith, *to every good work*; and *seeing that we walk circumspectly*, or behave ourselves exactly according to the rules of duty in all our conversation.

This service requireth of us assiduous attendance on works of piety and devotion; that we do *incessantly watch to prayer*, that we *always give thanks*, that we *continually do offer up the sacrifice of praise to God.*

It demandeth from us a continual labour of charity; that we *serve one another in love*; that we should as we *have opportunity, work good to all men*, that we should *always pursue good toward one another, and toward all men.*

It obligeth us *with all our powers to pursue peace with all men*; (which, considering our natural peevishness, pride, and perverseness, is often no easy task,) and that we do *συνδιᾶν, studiously endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.*

It chargeth on us contentedly and patiently to undergo whatever God doth impose of burden or sufferance, so

SERM.
LII.

Eph. v. 10.
Rom. xii. 2.
Luke xi.
28.
Matt. xxv.
27.
1 Cor.
58.

Col. iii. 24.
Eph. vi. 7.
1 Cor. vii.
23. vi. 20.
Tit. ii. 14,

2 Pet. i. 5.
Συνδιᾶν πᾶσι
ἀλλήλοις
ἀγαπᾶν
Tit. iii. 1.
Eph. v. 15.
Βλέπετε πᾶς
ἀνθρώπος—

Col. iv. 2.
Eph. vi. 18.
Rom. xii.
12.
1 Thess. v.
17.
Luke xviii.

1 Thess. v.
18.
Eph. v. 20.
Col. iii. 17.
Heb. xiii.
18.

1 Thess. i. 3.
Κίετες πᾶς
ἀγάπης.
Gal. v. 13.
Αὐτοδύνατοι.
Gal. vi. 10.
Ἐργαζώμεθα.
1 Thess. v.

15.
Ro. xii. 18.
Εἰ δυνατόν.
Heb. xii. 14. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Eph. iv. 8.

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SERM. that *patience have its perfect work*; and it is a crabbed
LII. work to bend our stiff inclinations, to quell our refractory
 Jam. i. 4. passions, to make our sturdy humour buckle thereto.

It doth exact that we should govern and regulate according to very strict and severe laws all the faculties of our soul, all the members of our body, all internal motions, and all external actions proceeding from us; that we should check our inclinations, curb our appetites, and compose our passions; that we should guard our hearts from vain thoughts and bad desires; that we should bridle our tongues from evil and from idle discourses; that we should order our steps in the straight way of righteousness, not deflecting to the right hand or to the left.

In the discharge of this service how many rough difficulties are there to be surmounted, how many great obstacles to be removed, how many stout oppositions to be encountered, how many potent enemies to be vanquished, how many sore hardships, crosses, and tribulations to be endured!

How shrewd a task must we find it to circumscribe our hearts, to mortify our earthly members, to crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts, to pull out our right eyes, and cut off our right hands, to renounce our worldly interests, to hate our nearest relations, to take up and bear our cross, whenever conscience and duty shall call us thereto!

Our calling therefore doth require great industry; and the business of it consequently is well represented by those performances, which demand the greatest intention, and laborious activity; it is styled *exercise*, (agonistic and af-

1 Tim. iv. 7. cetic exercise; γυμναζε σεαυτον προς ευσεβειαν, *Exercise thy-*
 Acts xxiv. self to godliness; and εν τούτῳ δε αὐτός ἀσκήω, *Herein I ex-*
 16. ercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence

Heb. xii. toward God and toward men;) wrestling, (ἡμῶν ἡ πάλη, *our*
 11. wrestling is not only against flesh and blood, but against

Eph. vi. 12. principalities and powers;) running a race, (Let us run
 Heb. xii. 1. with patience the race that is set before us: So run that ye
 1 Cor. ix. may obtain: I press toward the mark for the prize of the
 24. high calling;) a warfare, a combating, (War a good war-

Phil. iii. 14.
 2 Tim. iv. 7.
 1 Tim. i. 18.
 19.

fare, holding faith and a good conscience : Fight the good fight : Thou therefore endure hardship, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ : Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things ;) offering violence, (The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force ;) watching, (Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober : Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong : Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.)

SERM.
LII.
1 Tim. vi.
12.
2 Tim. ii. 8.
1 Cor. ix.
25.
Matt. xi.
12.
1 Theff. v.
6.
1 Cor. xvi.
13.

Hence the precepts importing the general tenor of Christian practice are usually couched in terms implying great sedulity and contention of soul ; Ἀγωνίζεσθε, Strive to enter in at the strait gate : Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest : Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end. Wherefore, brethren, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless.

Matt. xxiv.
42.
Luke xii.
37.
1 Pet. v. 8.
Apoc. iii. 2.
xvi. 15.
Luke xiii.
24.
Ἐνεδύσα-
μιν.
Heb. iv. 11.
Ἐργάζεσθαι.
John vi. 27.
Ἐνεδύσαται.
2 Pet. i. 10.
1 Pet. i. 13.
Luke xii.
35.
Eph. vi. 14.
2 Pet. iii.
14.

Such is the work of our general calling, and so much industry it challengeth from us ; with great reason indeed, for that such work is needful to our happiness, and that our labour will certainly be rewarded therewith.

The work indeed of itself is most worthy to employ us, doth most become us, doth much adorn us, doth best besit our divine extraction and large capacity ; is the noblest, the handsomest, the sweetest employment that could take us up ; but we have also the greatest inducements and encouragements possible for our industry therein.

There are, by the divine bounty and mercy, wages assigned abundantly correspondent to our work, yea, infinitely surpassing it ; there is πολὺς μισθός, a great (or a manifold) hire for our slender and simple performances ; there are several noble prizes highly worth our striving for with our utmost strength and contention of soul.

In recompense thereof we shall assuredly gain even here in this transitory state the special favour and love of God,

John iv.
36.

Matt. v. 12.

SERM. with his constant protection and care for our goodⁱ; his
LII. faithful direction and friendly assistance to guide us and
 uphold us in all our ways, to bless and prosper our under-
 takings, to supply us in our needs, and comfort us in our
 distresses; so that we shall *lack nothing* that is good, that
 no evil shall happen to us, that *all things* shall concur and
 cooperate for our benefit.

We shall thereby taste the satisfactions of a calm mind,
 and a sound conscience, quickened by the consolations of
 the divine Spirit; *the peace of God ruling in our hearts,*
which passeth all understanding.

We shall afterward, when this moment is passed over,
 and our short day's work dispatched, receive from God's
 bountiful hand an unconceivable affluence of good things,
 an eternal permanence of life; undisturbed rest, *indefec-*
tible wealth, ineffable joy, incorruptible glory, *a kingdom*
unshakable.

He, saith our Lord, *that reapeth, receiveth wages, and*
gathereth fruit unto life everlasting.

To them, saith St. Paul, who, by patient continuance in
 well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality,
 God in recompense will bestow eternal life. And,

I have, saith that blessed labourer of himself, *fought the*
good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the
faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righte-
ousness.

What more effectual spur or incentive can there be
 to industry in this business, than to consider that which
 St. Paul so often doth inculcate; *Knowing that whatso-*
ever good thing any man doeth, the same (a recompense
 for the same) *he shall receive of the Lord; and knowing*
that (in consideration of our service done to the Lord)
of the Lord we shall receive the reward of the inheri-
tance?

What exhortation can be more firmly grounded, or
 strongly backed, than is that of the Apostle, *Therefore,*

ⁱ Rom. xiv. 18. He that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to
 God, and approved of men.

my brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding
in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your
labour is not in vain in the Lord? SERM.
LII.

May it not also much encourage us to industry, to be
assured, that not only the kind of our work, but the de-
gree of our labour shall be considered and requited, in
just proportion; so that the harder we work, the higher
we shall be rewarded; for to each one, saith our Lord, *the*
Son of man shall render a reward *κατὰ τὴν ἐργασίαν αὐτοῦ*, ac-
cording to his performance. Every one, saith St. Paul,
shall receive *ἰδιον μισθὸν κατὰ τὸν ἰδιον κόπον*, his proper re-
ward according to his proper work; whence we have rea-
son to observe St. John's advice, *Look to yourselves, that*
ye lose not those things which ye have gained, but that ye
receive a full reward.

To be negligent or slothful in such a case, for want of
a little care and pains to forfeit such advantages, what a
pity, what a folly is it! Were an opportunity presented,
by a little minding our business, and bestirring ourselves,
to procure a fair estate, or a good preferment, would not
he be deemed mad or sottish, who should sit still, and
forego that his advantage? How much more wildness is
it to be drowsy and sluggish in this case, thereby losing
eternal bliss and glory! Well therefore might the Apostle
say, *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?*
How shall we escape, not only the sin and guilt of basest
ingratitude toward him that graciously doth offer it, but
the imputation of most wretched folly, in being so much
wanting to our own interest and welfare?

Is it not a sad thing, a woful shame, to observe what
pains men will throw away upon things of small or no
concernment to them? yea, what toil and drudgery they
will sustain in the service of Satan, in pursuit of sin, in the
gratification of their vanities and lusts?

What pains will a covetous wretch take in scraping for
pelf! How will he rack his mind with carking solicitude
to get, to keep, to spare it! How will he tire his spi-
rits with restless travail! How will he pinch his carcase
for want of what nature craveth! What infamy and

SERM. obloquy will he endure for his niggardly parsimony and
 LII. fordidness!

How much labour will an ambitious fop undergo for preferment, or vain honour! To how many tedious attendances, to how pitiful servilities will he submit! What sore crosses and disappointments will he swallow! What affronts and indignities will he patiently digest, without desisting from his enterprize!

1 Cor. ix. 25. How will a man, as St. Paul observed, πάντα ἑχρατεύ-
 εσθαι, endure all painful abstinence and continence, in order to the obtaining a *corruptible crown*, a fading garland of bays, a puff of vain applause!

What diligence will men use to compass the enjoyment of forbidden pleasures! how watchful in catching opportunities, how eager in quest of them will they be! What difficulties will they undertake, what hazards will they incur, what damages and inconveniences will they sustain, rather than fail of satisfying their desires!

What achings of head and heart; what pangs of mind, and gripes of conscience; what anxieties of regret and fear, will every worker of iniquity undergo! So faithful friends hath this vain and evil world; so diligent servants hath the accursed lord thereof; so careful and laborious will men be to destroy and damn themselves. O that we could be willing to spend as much care and pains in the service of our God! O that we were as true friends of ourselves! O that we could be as industrious for our salvation! that is, in the business of our general calling: which having considered, let us proceed to the other business belonging to us, which is,

II. The business of our particular calling; that in reference whereto St. Paul doth prescribe, *Every man as the Lord hath called him, so let him walk. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called*; let him so abide, as faithfully to prosecute the work, and discharge the duty of it; the doing which otherwhere he termeth *ἑκάστων τὰ ἴδια*, to do our own business, (working with our hands,) and enjoineth it in opposition to those two great pests of life, sloth and pragmatical curiosity;

Chryf.
 ἀνδρ. 19

1 Cor. vii.
 17, 20.

1 Theff. iv.
 11.

Eph. iv. 28.

or the neglect of our own, and meddling with other men's affairs. SERM.
LII.

This the Apostle nameth *our calling*, because we are called or appointed thereto by divine Providence; for he supposeth and taketh it for granted, that to each man in this world God hath assigned a certain station, unto which peculiar action is suited; in which station he biddeth him quietly to abide, till Providence fairly doth translate him, ^{1 Cor. vii.} and during his abode therein diligently to execute the ^{22.} work thereof.

Every man is a member of a double body; of the civil commonwealth, and of the Christian church: in relation to the latter whereof St. Paul telleth us, (and what he saith by parity of reason may be referred likewise to the former,) that *God hath set the members every one in the* ^{1 Cor. xii.} *body, as it pleaseth him*; and as it is in the natural, so it ^{18.} is in every political and spiritual body, every member hath its proper use and function; *All members*, saith St. Paul, ^{Rom. xii.} *have not τὴν αὐτὴν πράξιν, the same office, or the same work* ^{4.} and operation; yet every one hath some work. There is no member designed to be idle or useless, conferring no benefit to the whole; but *the whole body*, saith the ^{Eph. iv. 16.} Apostle, *fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying itself in love*; each member doth conspire and cooperate to the strength, nourishment, thriving, and welfare of the whole.

Every man (who continueth a man, in his senses, or in ^{ἑαυτοῦ ὡς ἐν} any good degree of natural integrity) is by God endowed ^{ἑαυτοῦ ὡς ἐν} with competent abilities to discharge some function useful ^{17.} to common good, or at least needful to his own sustenance; to every one some talent is committed, which in subordination to God's service he may improve, to the benefit of the world, God's temporal, or of the church, God's spiritual kingdom.

It is plainly necessary, that the greatest part of men should have a determinate work allotted to them, that they may support their life and get their food, without

SERM. being injurious, offensive, or burdensome to others; for
LII. their living they must either follow some trade, or they
 must shirk and slich, or they must beg, or they must
 starve.

And the rest are obliged to do somewhat conducive to public good, that they may deserve to live; for a drone should not be among the bees, nor hath right to devour the honey. If any man doth pretend, or presume, that he hath nothing to do but to eat, to sleep, to play, to laugh, to enjoy his ease, his pleasure, his humour, he thereby doth as it were disclaim a reasonable title of living among men, and sharing in the fruits of their industry; he, in St. Paul's judgment, should be debarred of food, for

2 Theff. iii. *this, saith the holy Apostle, we commanded you, that if*
 10. *any man would not work, neither should he eat.*

Such an one in the body of men, what is he but an unnatural excrescence, sucking nutriment from it, without yielding ornament or use? What is he but a wen deforming and encumbering the body, or a canker infesting and corrupting it?

As no man (at least with decency, convenience, and comfort) can live in the world, without being obliged to divers other men for their help in providing accommodations for him; so justice and ingenuity, corroborated by divine sanctions, do require of him, that in commutation he, one way or other, should undertake some pains redounding to the benefit of others.

So hath the great Author of order distributed the ranks and offices of men in order to mutual benefit and comfort, that one man should plough, another thrash, another grind, another labour at the forge, another knit or weave, another sail, another trade, another supervise all these, labouring to keep them all in order and peace; that one should work with his hands and feet, another with his head and tongue; all conspiring to one common end, the welfare of the whole, and the supply of what is useful to each particular member; every man so reciprocally obliging and being obliged; the prince being obliged to the husbandman for his bread, to the weaver for his clothes,

to the mason for his palace, to the smith for his sword; **SERM.**
those being all obliged to him for his vigilant care in pro- **LII.**
tecting them, for their security in pursuing the work, and
enjoying the fruit of their industry.

So every man hath a calling and proper business;
whereto that industry is required, I need not much to
prove, the thing itself in reason and experience being so
clearly evident: for what business can be well dispatched,
what success can be expected to any undertaking, in what
calling can any man thrive, without industry? What bu-
siness is there that will go on of itself, or proceed to any
good issue, if we do not carefully look to it, steadily hold
it in its course, constantly push and drive it forward? It is
true, as in nature, so in all affairs, *Nihil movet non motum*,
nothing moveth without being moved.

Our own interest should move us to be industrious in
our calling, that we may obtain the good effects of being
so in a comfortable and creditable subsistence; that we
may not suffer the damages and wants, the disappoint-
ments and disgraces ensuing on sloth: but the chief mo-
tive should be from piety and conscience; for that it is a
duty which we owe to God. For God having placed us
in our station, he having apportioned to us our task, we
being in transaction of our business his servants, we do ^{1 Cor. iv.}
owe to him that necessary property of good servants, ^{2.}
without which fidelity cannot subsist; for how can he be
looked on as a faithful servant, who doth not effectually
perform the work charged on him, or diligently execute
the orders of his master?

St. Paul doth enjoin servants, that they should *in all* ^{Col. iii. 22.}
things obey their masters, with conscientious regard to ^{Eph. vi. 5.}
God, as therein performing service to God, and expecting ^{1 Cor. vii.}
recompense from him: and of princes he saith, that they, ^{22, 23.}
in dispensation of justice, enacting laws, imposing taxes,
and all political administrations, are *the ministers of God*, ^{Rom. xiii.}
non usurpatores, attending constantly upon this very thing: ^{6.}
and if these extremes, the highest and lowest of all voca-
tions, are services of God; if the highest upon that score
be tied to so much diligence, then surely all middle places,

SERM. upon the same account of conscience toward God, do exact
LII. no less.

If he that hath one talent, and he that hath ten, must both improve them for God's interest; then he that hath two, or three, or more, is obliged to the same duty proportionably.

Every one should consider the world as the family of Eph. iii. 15. that great Paterfamilias, *of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*, and himself as an officer or servant therein, by God's will and designation constituted in that employment, into which Providence hath cast him; to confer, in his order and way, somewhat toward a provision for the maintenance of himself, and of his fellow-servants. Of a superior officer our Lord saith, *Who is that faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them their meat in due season?* So the greatest men are as stewards, treasurers, comptrollers, or purveyors; the rest are inferior servants, in their proper rank and capacity.

And he that with diligence performeth his respective duty (be it high and honourable, or mean and contemptible in outward appearance) will please God, as keeping good order, and as being useful to his service; so that, upon the reckoning, God will say to him, *Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* But he that doeth otherwise (behaving himself carelessly or sluggishly in his business) will offend God, as committing disorder, and as being unprofitable.

He committeth disorder, according to that of St. Paul; 2 Theff. iii. *We hear there are some, which walk among you disorderly, not working at all.* His sentence and doom will be, according to our Lord, *O thou wicked and slothful servant—Cast the unprofitable servant into utter darkness; which words are spoken in relation to one, who being a flatterer, or sluggard in his calling, did not improve the special talent intrusted with him for God's service.*

In fine, if we are conscientiously industrious in our vo-

cation, we shall assuredly find the blessing of God thereon; and that he thereby will convey good success, comfort, competent wealth, a fair reputation, all desirable good unto us; for as all these things are promised to industry, so the promise especially doth belong to that industry, which a man doth exercise in an orderly course of action in his own way; or rather in God's way, wherein divine Providence hath set him.

SERM.
LII.

An irregular or impertinent laboriousness, out of a man's calling or sphere; a being diligent in other men's affairs, invading their office, (as if I a priest will be trading, a layman preaching,) may not claim the benefit of those promises, or the blessings of industry: but a husbandman, who, with conscientious regard to God, and confidence in him, is painful in tilling his ground, may expect a good crop; a merchant, who (upon the same principle, with the like disposition) earnestly followeth his trade, may hope for safe voyages and good markets; a prince carefully minding his affairs may look for peace and prosperity to his country; a scholar studying hard may be well assured of getting knowledge, and finding truth; all, who with honest diligence constantly do pursue their business, may confidently and cheerfully hope to reap the advantages suitable to it from the favourable blessing of God. So that we have all reason to observe the Apostle's precept, *Not to be slothful in business.*

Prov. x. 4.
xiii. 11.

I should apply this doctrine to our own case, urging its practice by considerations peculiar to our vocation: but having already passed the bounds of time, I reserve the doing it to another opportunity.

Now the God of peace sanctify you wholly, and make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ; to whom for ever be all glory and praise. Amen.

1 Thess. v.
23.
Heb. xiii.
20.

SERMON LIII.

OF INDUSTRY IN OUR PARTICULAR CALLING, AS GENTLEMEN.

ROM. xii. 11.

Not slothful in business.

SERM. LIII. I HAVE largely treated upon the duty recommended in this precept, and urged the observance of it in general, at a distance: I now intend more particularly and closely to apply it, in reference to those persons who seem more especially obliged to it, and whose observing it may prove of greatest consequence to public good; the which application may also be most suitable and profitable to this audience. Those persons are of two sorts; the one Gentlemen, the other Scholars.

I. The first place, as civility demandeth, we assign to Gentlemen, or persons of eminent rank in the world, well allied, graced with honour, and furnished with wealth: the which sort of persons I conceive in a high degree obliged to exercise industry in business.

This at first hearing may seem a little paradoxical and strange; for who have less business than Gentlemen? who do need less industry than they? He that hath a fair estate, and can live on his means, what hath he to do, what labour or trouble can be exacted of him, what hath he to think on, or trouble his head with, but how to invent recreations and pastimes to divert himself, and spend his waste leisure pleasantly? Why should not he be allowed to enjoy himself, and the benefits which na-

ture or fortune have freely dispensed to him, as he thinketh **SERM.**
best, without offence? Why may he not say with the **LIII.**
rich man in the Gospel, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up* Luke xli.
for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry? ^{19.}

Is it not often said by the Wise Man, that there is *no-* Ecclef. ii.
thing better under the sun, than that a man should make 24. iii. 22.
his soul to enjoy good in a cheerful and comfortable fru- v. 18. viii.
ition of his estate? According to the passable notion and
definition, *What is a Gentleman but his pleasure?* ^{15.}

If this be true, if a Gentleman be nothing else but this,
then truly he is a sad piece, the most inconsiderable, the
most despicable, the most pitiful and wretched creature in
the world: if it is his privilege to do nothing, it is his
privilege to be most unhappy; and to be so will be his
fate, if he live according to it; for he that is of no worth
or use, who produceth no beneficial fruit, who performeth
no service to God, or to the world, what title can he have
to happiness? What capacity thereof? What reward can
he claim? What comfort can he feel? To what tempt-
ations is he exposed! What guilts will he incur!

But in truth it is far otherwise: to suppose that a Gen-
tleman is loose from business, is a great mistake; for in-
deed no man hath more to do, no man lieth under greater
engagements to industry than he.

He is deeply obliged to be continually busy in more
ways than other men, who have but one simple calling
or occupation allotted to them; and that upon a triple
account; in respect to God, to the world, and to him-
self.

I. He is first obliged to continual employment in re-
spect to God.

He, out of a grateful regard to divine bounty for the
eminency of his station, adorned with dignity and repute,
for the plentiful accommodations and comforts of his life,
for his exemption from those pinching wants, those
meaner cares, those sordid entertainments, and those toil-
some drudgeries, to which other men are subject, is bound
to be more diligent in God's service, employing all the
advantages of his state to the glory of his munificent Be-

SERM. nefactor, to whose good providence alone he doth owe
LIII. them; for *who maketh him to differ* from another? And
 1 Cor. iv. *what hath he that he did not receive* from God's free
 7. bounty?

In proportion to the bulk of his fortune, his heart should be enlarged with a thankful sense of God's goodness to him; his mouth should ever be filled with acknowledgment and praise; he should always be ready to express his grateful resentment of so great and peculiar obligations.

He should dedicate larger portions of that free leisure which God hath granted to him, in waiting upon God, and constant performances of devotion.

He, in frequently reflecting on the particular ample favours of God to him, should imitate the holy Psalmist, that illustrious pattern of great and fortunate men; saying after him, with his spirit and disposition of soul; *Thou hast brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every side; therefore will I praise thee and thy faithfulness, O God.*

Pfal. lxxi. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to
 21. stand strong: Thou hast set my feet in a large room: Thou preparest a table before me:—Thou anointest my head with
Pfal. xxx. oil, my cup runneth over;—to the end that my glory may
 7. xxxi. 8. sing praise unto thee, and not be silent: The Lord is the
 xxiii. 5. portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage; therefore I will bless the Lord.

In conceiving such meditations, his head and his heart should constantly be employed; as also in contriving ways of declaring and discharging real gratitude; asking himself, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?* What shall I render to him, not only as a man, for all the gifts of nature; as a Christian, for all the blessings of grace; but as a Gentleman also, for the many advantages of this my condition, beyond so many of my brethren, by special Providence indulged to me?

He hath all the common duties of piety, of charity, of

fobriety, to discharge with fidelity; for being a Gentleman doth not exempt him from being a Christian, but rather more strictly doth engage him to be such in a higher degree than others; it is an obligation peculiarly incumbent on him, in return for God's peculiar favours, to pay God all due obedience, and to exercise himself in all good works; disobedience being a more heinous crime in him than in others, who have not such encouragements to serve God.

His obedience may be inculcated by those arguments which Joshua and Samuel did use in pressing it on the Israelites; *Only, said Samuel, fear the Lord, and serve him in truth; for consider how great things God hath done for you.* And, *I have given you, saith God by Joshua, a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not; and ye dwell in them: of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not, do ye eat.* Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth.

His disobedience may be aggravated, as Nehemiah did that of the Israelites: *They took strong cities and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards and oliveyards, and fruit-trees in abundance; so they did eat and were filled, and became fat; and delighted themselves in thy great goodness: nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs—They have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness, which thou gavest them; neither turned they from their wicked works.*

A Gentleman hath more talents committed to him, and consequently more employment required of him: if a rustic labourer, or a mechanic artisan, hath one talent, a Gentleman hath ten; he hath innate vigour of spirit, and height of courage fortified by use; he hath accomplishment and refinement of parts by liberal education; he hath the succours of parentage, alliance, and friendship; he hath wealth, he hath honour, he hath power and authority, he hath command of time and leisure; he hath so many precious and useful talents intrusted to him, not to be wrapped up in a napkin, or hidden under ground;

SERM.
LIII.

1 Sam. xii.
24.

Josh. xxiv.
13, 14.

Nehem. ix.
25, &c.
(1f. lxiii. 10.
Psal. cvi. 6.
Jer. ii. 7.
Ezek. xvi.

7.
1 Sam. xv.
17.

2 Sam. xii.
7.

1 Kings
xvi. 26. 35.)

Luke xix.
20.

Matt. xxv.
25.

SERM. not to be squandered away in private satisfactions; but
 LIII. *for negotiation, to be put out to use, to be improved in*
 Πρωμα- the most advantageous way to God's service. Every ta-
 τισμασι. lent doth require a particular care and pains to manage it
 Luke xix. well.

13.
 Ἐργαζο-
 μεθα.

Matt. xxv.

16, 27.

Matt. xxv.

14.

Παρονο-
 μάζοντα

αὐτοῦ.

Luke xii.

49.

Χάρισμα.

1 Pet. iv.

10.

1 Tim. vi.

17, 18.

He particularly is God's steward, intrusted with God's substance for the sustenance and supply of God's family; to relieve his fellow-servants in their need, upon seasonable occasions, by hospitality, mercy, and charitable beneficence; according to that intimation of our Lord, *Who is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler of his household, to give them their portion and meat in due season?* And according to those apostolical precepts, *As every one hath received a gift, (or special favour,) even so minister the same to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God: and, Charge the rich in this world,—that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.*

And he that is obliged to purvey for so many, and so to abound in good works, how can he want business? How can he pretend to a *writ of ease*?

Surely that Gentleman is very blind, and very barren of invention, who is to seek for work fit for him, or cannot easily discern many employments belonging to him, of great concern and consequence.

It is easy to prompt and shew him many businesses, indispensably belonging to him, as such.

It is his business to minister relief to his poor neighbours, in their wants and distresses, by his wealth. It is his business to direct and advise the ignorant, to comfort the afflicted, to reclaim the wicked, and encourage the good, by his wisdom. It is his business to protect the weak, to rescue the oppressed, to ease those who groan under heavy burdens, by his power; to be such a Gentleman and so employed as Job was; who *did not eat his morsel alone, so that the fatherless did not eat thereof; who did not withhold the poor from their desire, or cause the eyes of the widow to fail; who did not see any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; who delivered*

Job xxxi.
 17, 18.

Job xxxi.
 19.

Job xxxi.
 12.

the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. **SERM. LIII.**

It is his business to be hospitable; kind and helpful to strangers; following those noble Gentlemen, Abraham and Lot, who were so ready to invite and entertain strangers with bountiful courtesy.

1 Pet. iv. 9.
Heb. xiii. 2.
Rom. xii. 13.
Gen. xviii. 1. xix. 1.

It is his business to maintain peace, and appease diffusions among his neighbours, interposing his counsel and authority in order thereto: whereto he hath that brave Gentleman, Moses, recommended for his pattern.

Exod. ii.

It is his business to promote the welfare and prosperity of his country with his best endeavours, and by all his interest; in which practice the sacred History doth propound divers gallant Gentleman (Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Nehemiah, Daniel, Mordecai, and all such renowned patriots) to guide him.

13.
Acts vii. 26.

(Judg. v. 9.)

It is his business to govern his family well; to educate his children in piety and virtue; to keep his servants in good order.

Josh. xxiv. 15.
Psalm. ci.

It is his business to look to his estate, and to keep it from wasting; that he may sustain the repute of his person and quality with decency; that he may be furnished with ability to do good, may provide well for his family, may be hospitable, may have wherewith to help his brethren; for if, according to St. Paul's injunction, a man should work with his own hands, that he may have somewhat to impart to him that needeth, then must he that hath an estate be careful to preserve it, for the same good purpose.

Moral. lxxvi.
Eph. iv. 28.

It is his business to cultivate his mind with knowledge, with generous dispositions, with all worthy accomplishments befitting his condition, and qualifying him for honourable action; so that he may excel, and bear himself above the vulgar level, no less in real inward worth, than in exterior garb; that he be not a Gentleman merely in name or show.

It is his business (and that no slight or easy business) to eschew the vices, to check the passions, to withstand the temptations, to which his condition is liable; taking heed

Ardus nam res est opibus non tradere mores.

64 *Of Industry in our particular Calling, as Gentlemen.*

SERM. that his wealth, honour, and power do not betray him
LIII. unto pride, insolence, or contempt of his poorer brethren;
unto injustice or oppression; unto luxury and riotous excess;
unto sloth, stupidity, forgetfulness of God, and irreligious profaneness.

It is a business especially incumbent on him to be careful of his ways, that they may have good influence on others, who are apt to look upon him as their guide and pattern.

He should labour and study to be a leader unto virtue, and a notable promoter thereof; directing and exciting men thereto by his exemplary conversation; encouraging them by his countenance and authority; rewarding the goodness of meaner people by his bounty and favour: he should be such a Gentleman as Noah, who *preached righteousness* by his words and works before a profane world.

Such particular affairs hath every person of quality, credit, wealth, and interest, allotted to him by God, and laid on him as duties; the which to discharge faithfully, will enough employ a man, and doth require industry, much care, much pains; excluding sloth and negligence: so that it is impossible for a sluggard to be a worthy Gentleman, virtuously disposed, a charitable neighbour, a good patriot, a good husband of his estate; any thing of that, to which God, by setting him in such a station, doth call him.

Thus is a Gentleman obliged to industry in respect of God, who justly doth exact those labours of piety, charity, and all virtue from him. Farther,

2. He hath also obligations to mankind, demanding industry from him, upon accounts of common humanity, equity, and ingenuity; for,

How can he fairly subsist upon the common industry of mankind, without bearing a share thereof? How can he well satisfy himself to dwell stately, to feed daintily, to be finely clad, to maintain a pompous retinue, merely upon the sweat and toil of others, without himself rendering a compensation, or making some competent re-

turns of care and pain, redounding to the good of his neighbour? **SERM. LIII.**

How can he justly claim, or reasonably expect from the world the respect agreeable to his rank, if he doth not by worthy performances conduce to the benefit of it? Can men be obliged to regard those, from whom they receive no good?

If no Gentleman be tied to serve the public, or to yield help in sustaining the common burdens, and supplying the needs of mankind, then is the whole order merely a burden, and an offence to the world; a race of drones, a pack of cyphers in the commonwealth, standing for nothing, deserving no consideration or regard: and if any are bound, then all are; for why should the whole burden lie on some, while others are exempted?

It is indeed supposed, that all are bound thereto, seeing that all have recompenses publicly allowed to them upon such considerations; divers respects and privileges peculiar to the order, grounded upon this supposition, that they deserve such advantages by conferring notable benefit to the public; the which indeed it were an arrogance to seek, and an iniquity to accept for doing nothing.

It is an insufferable pride for any man to pretend or conceit himself to differ so much from his brethren, that he may be allowed to live in ease and sloth, while the rest of mankind are subject to continual toil and trouble. Moreover,

3. A Gentleman is bound to be industrious for his own sake; it is a duty which he oweth to himself, to his honour, to his interest, to his welfare. He cannot without industry continue like himself, or maintain the honour and repute becoming his quality and state, or secure himself from contempt and disgrace; for to be honourable and slothful are things inconsistent, seeing honour doth not grow, nor can subsist without undertaking worthy designs, constantly pursuing them, and happily achieving

SERM. them; it is the fruit and reward of such actions, which
LIIE. are not performed with ease.

External respect and a semblance of honour, for the sake of public order, may be due to an exterior rank or title: but to pay this, is not to honour the person, but his title; because it is supposed, that men of real worth and use do bear it; or lest, by refusing it to one, the whole order may seem disrespected: but yet true honour, or mental esteem, is not due upon such accounts; nor is it possible to render it unto any person, who doth not by worthy qualities and good deeds appear to merit it.

Nor can a Gentleman without industry uphold his real interests against the attempts of envy, of treachery, of flattery, of sycophantry, of avarice, to which his condition is obnoxious: to preserve his wealth and estate, which are the supports of his quality, he must endure care and pains; otherwise he will by greedy harpies and crafty lurchers be rifled or cozened of his substance; it will of itself go to wreck, and be embezzled by negligence.

He cannot without industry guard his personal welfare from manifold inconveniences, molestations, and mischiefs; idleness itself will be very troublesome and hurtful to him. His time will lie upon his hands, as a pestering incumbrance. His mind will be infested with various distractions and distempers; vain and sad thoughts, foul lusts, and unquiet passions will spring up therein, as weeds in a neglected soil. His body will languish and become destitute of health, of vigour, of activity, for want of due exercise. All the mischiefs, which naturally do spring from sloth and stupidity, will seize upon him.

4. Thus, upon various accounts, a Gentleman is engaged to business, and concerned to exercise industry therein: we may add, that indeed the very nature of gentility, or the true notion of a Gentleman, doth imply so much.

For what, I pray, is a Gentleman, what properties hath he, what qualities are characteristical or peculiar to him,

whereby he is distinguished from others; and raised above the vulgar? Are they not especially two, courage and courtesy? which he that wanteth is not otherwise than equivocally a Gentleman, as an image or a carcase is a man; without which, gentility in a conspicuous degree is no more than a vain show, or an empty name: and these plainly do involve industry, do exclude slothfulness; for courage doth prompt boldly to undertake, and resolutely to dispatch great enterprizes and employments of difficulty: it is not seen in a flaunting garb, or strutting deportment; not in hectorly, ruffian-like swaggering or huffing; not in high looks or big words; but in stout and gallant deeds, employing vigour of mind and heart to achieve them: how can a man otherwise approve himself for courageous, than by signalizing himself in such a way?

SERM.
LIII.

And for courtesy, how otherwise can it be well displayed than in sedulous activity for the good of men? It surely doth not consist in modish forms of address, or complimentary expressions, or hollow professions, commonly void of meaning, or of sincerity; but in real performances of beneficence, when occasion doth invite, and in waiting for opportunities to do good; the which practice is accompanied with some care and pain, adding a price to it; for an easy courtesy is therefore small, because easy, and may be deemed to proceed rather from ordinary humanity, than from gentle disposition; so that, in fine, he alone doth appear truly a Gentleman, who hath the heart to undergo hard tasks for public good, and willingly taketh pains to oblige his neighbours and friends.

5. The work indeed of Gentlemen is not so gross, but it may be as smart and painful, as any other. For all hard work is not manual; there are other instruments of action beside the plough, the spade, the hammer, the shuttle: nor doth every work produce sweat, and visible tiring of body: the head may work hard in contrivance of good designs; the tongue may be very active in dispensing advice, persuasion, comfort, and edification in virtue; a man may bestir himself in *going about to do good*: these

SERM. are works employing the cleanly industry of a Gentle-
LIII. man.

6. In such works it was, that the truest and greatest pattern of gentility that ever was, did employ himself. Who was that? Even our Lord himself; for he had no particular trade or profession: no man can be more loose from any engagement to the world than he was; no man had less need of business or pains-taking than he; for he had a vast estate, being *heir of all things*, all the world being at his disposal; yea, infinitely more, it being in his power with a word to create whatever he would to serve his need, or satisfy his pleasure; omnipotency being his treasure and supply; he had a retinue of angels to wait on him, and minister to him; whatever sufficiency

Isa. liii. 11. any man can fancy to himself to dispense with his taking pains, that had he in a far higher degree: yet did he find work for himself, and continually was employed in performing service to God, and imparting benefits to men; nor was ever industry exercised upon earth comparable to his.

Gentlemen therefore would do well to make him the pattern of their life, to whose industry they must be beholden for their salvation: in order whereto we recommend them to his grace.

SERMON LIV.

OF INDUSTRY IN OUR PARTICULAR CALLING, AS SCHOLARS.

ROM. xii. 11.

Not slothful in business.

I PROCEED to the other sort of persons, whom we did **SERM.**
propound, namely, **LIV.**

H. Scholars; and that on them particularly great engagements do lie to be industrious, is most evident from various considerations.

The nature and design of this calling doth suppose industry; the matter and extent of it doth require industry; the worth of it doth highly deserve industry. We are in special gratitude to God, in charity to men, in due regard to ourselves, bound unto it.

I. First, I say, the nature and design of our calling doth suppose industry: *There is*, saith the divine Preacher, Ecclef. ii. *a man whose labour is in wisdom, in knowledge, and in* ^{21.}

equity. Such men are Scholars; so that we are indeed no Scholars, but absurd usurpers of the name, if we are not laborious; for what is a Scholar, but one who retir-eth his person, and avocath his mind from other occupations, and worldly entertainments, that he may σχολάζειν, *vacare studiis*, employ his mind and leisure on study and learning, in the search of truth, the quest of know-
ledge, the improvement of his reason. Wherefore an
idle scholar, a lazy student, a sluggish man of learning, is
nonsense.

*ἡ σοφία
γραμματικὴ
ἢ ἐμπειρία
σχολάζειν.
Ecclef.
xxxviii. 24.*

SERM. What is learning, but a diligent attendance to instruc-
 LIV. tion of masters, skilled in any knowledge, and conveying
 ——— their notions to us in word or writing?

What is study, but an earnest, steady, persevering application of mind to some matter, on which we fix our thoughts, with intent to see through it? What in Solomon's language are these scholastic occupations, but *inclining the ear*, and *applying our heart to understanding*? than which commonly there is nothing more laborious, more straining nature, and more tiring our spirits; whence it is well compared to the most painful exercises of body and soul.

The Wise Man, advising men to seek wisdom, the which is the proper design of our calling, doth intimate that work to be like digging in the mines for silver, and like searching all about for concealed treasure; than which there can hardly be any more difficult and painful task: *If, saith he, thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand.*— Otherwhere he compareth the same work to assiduous watching and waiting, like that of a guard or a client, which are the greatest instances of diligence; *Blessed, saith he, (or Wisdom by him saith, Blessed) is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.*

Prov. viii.
34.

Wherefore, if we will approve ourselves to be what we are called, and what we pretend to be; if we will avoid being impostors, assuming a name not due to us, we must not be slothful. Farther,

2. The matter and extent of our business doth require industry from us: the matter of it, which is truth and knowledge; the extent, which is very large and comprehensive, taking in all truth, all knowledge, worthy our study, and useful for the designs of it.

Our business is to find truth; the which, even in matters of high importance, is not easily to be discovered; being as a vein of silver, encompassed with earth and mixed with dross, deeply laid in the obscurity of things, wrapt up in false appearances, entangled with objections,

and perplexed with debates; being therefore not readily discoverable, especially by minds clouded with prejudices, lusts, passions, partial affections, appetites of honour and interest; whence to descry it requireth the most curious observation and solicitous circumspection that can be; together with great pains in the preparation and purgation of our minds toward the inquiry of it.

SERM.
LIV.

Our business is to attain knowledge, not concerning obvious and vulgar matters, but about sublime, abstruse, intricate, and knotty subjects, remote from common observation and sense; to get sure and exact notions about which will try the best forces of our mind with their utmost endeavours; in firmly settling principles, in strictly deducing consequences, in orderly digesting conclusions, in faithfully retaining what we learn by our contemplation and study.

And if to get a competent knowledge about a few things, or to be reasonably skilful in any sort of learning, be difficult, how much industry doth it require to be well seen in many, or to have waded through the vast compass of learning, in no part whereof a Scholar may conveniently or handsomely be ignorant; seeing there is such a connection of things, and dependence of notions, that one part of learning doth confer light to another, that a man can hardly well understand any thing without knowing divers other things; that he will be a lame Scholar, who hath not an insight into many kinds of knowledge; that he can hardly be a good Scholar, who is not a general one.

To understand so many languages, which are the shells of knowledge; to comprehend so many sciences, full of various theorems and problems; to peruse so many histories of ancient and modern times; to know the world, both natural and human; to be acquainted with the various inventions, inquiries, opinions, and controversies of learned men; to skill the arts of expressing our mind, and imparting our conceptions with advantage, so as to instruct or persuade others; these are works indeed, which

SERM. will exercise and strain all our faculties (our reason, our
LIV. fancy, our memory) in painful study.

The knowledge of such things is not innate to us; it doth not of itself spring up in our minds; it is not any ways incident by chance, or infused by grace, (except rarely by miracle;) common observation doth not produce it; it cannot be purchased at any rate, except by that, for which it was said of old, *the gods sell all things*, that is for pains; without which, the best wit and greatest capacity may not render a man learned, as the best soil will not yield good fruit or grain, if they be not planted or sown therein.

Dii laboribus omnia vendunt.

Consider, if you please, what a scholar Solomon was: beside his skill in politics, which was his principal faculty and profession, whereby he did with admirable dexterity and prudence manage the affairs of that great kingdom,
 1 Kings iii. *judging his people, and discerning what was good and bad;*
 9. accurately dispensing justice; settling his country in a most flourishing state of peace, order, plenty, and wealth;
 1 Kings iv. largely extending his territory; so that his wisdom of this
 20, 25. kind was famous over the earth: beside, I say, this civil
 x. 27. wisdom, he had an exquisite skill in natural philosophy
 1 Kings iv. and medicine; for *He spake of trees, or plants, from the*
 21, &c. *cedar that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth*
 1 Kings x. *out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of*
 6, 24. *creeping things, and of fishes.*
 1 Kings iv. 33.

He was well versed in mathematics; for it is said,
 1 Kings iv. *Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children*
 30. *of the east-country, and all the wisdom of Egypt;* the wisdom of which nations did consist in those sciences. And of his mechanic skill he left for a monument the most glorious structure that ever stood on earth.

He was very skilful in poetry and music; for he did
 1 Kings iv. *himself compose above a thousand songs;* whereof one yet
 32. extant declareth the loftiness of his fancy, the richness of his vein, and the elegance of his style.

He had great ability in rhetoric; according to that in
 Wisd. vii. *Wisdom, God granteth me to speak as I would;* and that
 15.

in Ecclesiastes, *The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words*; a great instance of which faculty we have in that admirable prayer of his compofure at the dedication of the Temple. SERM. LIV.

He did wonderfully excel in ethics; concerning which he *spake three thousand proverbs*, or moral aphorisms; and moreover, faith Ecclesiastes, *because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs*; the which did contain a great variety of notable observations, and useful directions for common life, couched in pithy expressions. Ecclef. xii. 10. 1 Kings viii. 1 Kings iv. 32. Ecclef. xii.

As for theology, as the study of that was the chief study to which he exhorteth others, (as to the *head*, or principal part, of *wisdom*,) so questionless he was himself most conversant therein; for proof whereof he did leave so many excellent theorems and precepts of divinity to us. Prov. ii. 5, &c.

In fine, there is no sort of knowledge, to which he did not apply his study; witness himself in those words, *I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven*. Ecclef. i. 13.

Such a Scholar was he; and such if we have a noble ambition to be, we must use the course he did; which was first in his heart to prefer wisdom before all worldly things; then to pray to God for it, or for his blessing in our quest of it; then to use the means of attaining it, diligent searching and hard study; for that this was his method he telleth us; *I, faith he, applied my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things*. Ecclef. vii. 25.

Such considerations shew the necessity of industry for a Scholar. But,

3. The worth, and excellency, and great utility, together with the pleasantness of his vocation, deserving the highest industry, do superadd much obligation thereto.

We are much bound to be diligent out of ingenuity, and in gratitude to God, who by his gracious providence hath assigned to us a calling so worthy, an employment

SERM. fo comfortable, a way of life no lefs commodious, beneficial, and delightful to ourfelves, than ferviceable to God, and ufeful for the world.

LIV.

If we had our option and choice, what calling could we defire before this of any whereto men are affixed? How could we better employ our mind, or place our labour, or fpend our time, or pafs our pilgrimage in this world, than in fcholaftical occupations?

It were hard to reckon up, or to exprefs, the numberlefs great advantages of this calling: I fhall therefore only touch fome, which readily fall under my thought, recommending its value to us.

It is a calling, the defign whereof confpireth with the general end of our being; the perfection of our nature in its endowments, and the fruition of it in its beft operations.

It is a calling, which doth not employ us in bodily toil, in worldly care, in purfuit of trivial affairs, in fordid drudgeries; but in thofe angelical operations of foul, the contemplation of truth, and attainment of wifdom; which are the worthieft exercifes of our reafon, and fweeteft entertainments of our mind; the moft precious wealth, and moft beautiful ornaments of our foul; whereby our faculties are improved, are polifhed and refined, are enlarged in their power and ufe by habitual acceffions: the which are conducing to our own greateft profit and benefit, as ferving to rectify our wills, to compofe our affections, to guide our lives in the ways of virtue, to bring us unto felicity.

Prov. ii. 4,
10, 11.

It is a calling, which, being duly followed, will moft fever us from the vulgar fort of men, and advance us above the common pitch; enduing us with light to fee farther than other men, difpofing us to affect better things, and to flight thofe meaner objects of human defire, on which men commonly dote; freeing us from the erroneous conceits and from the perverfe affections of common people. It is faid, διπλὴν ἐξῶσιν οἱ μακάριοι γράμματα, *men of learning are double-fighted*: but it is true, that in many cafes they fee infinitely farther than a vulgar fight

doth reach. And if a man by ferious study doth acquire a clear and solid judgment of things, so as to assign to each its due weight and price; if he accordingly be inclined in his heart to affect and pursue them; if from clear and right notions of things, a meek and ingenuous temper of mind, a command and moderation of passions, a firm integrity, and a cordial love of goodness do spring, he thereby becometh another kind of thing, much different from those brutish men (beasts of the people) who blindly follow the motions of their sensual appetite, or the suggestions of their fancy, or their mistaken prejudices.

It is a calling, which hath these considerable advantages, that, by virtue of improvement therein, we can see with our own eyes, and guide ourselves by our own reasons, not being led blindfold about, or depending precariously on the conduct of others, in matters of highest concern to us; that we are exempted from giddy credulity, from wavering levity, from fond admiration of persons and things, being able to distinguish of things, and to settle our judgments about them, and to get an intimate acquaintance with them, assuring to us their true nature and worth; that we are also thereby rescued from admiring ourselves, and that over-weening self-conceit-ness, of which the Wise Man saith, *The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.* Prov. xxvi. 16.

It is a calling, whereby we are qualified and enabled to do God service; to gratify his desires, to promote his honour, to advance his interests; to render his name glorious in the world, by teaching, maintaining, and propagating his truth; by persuading men to render their due love, reverence, and obedience to him; than which we can have no more honourable or satisfactory employment; more like to that of the glorious and blessed spirits.

It is a calling, the due prosecution whereof doth ingratiate us with God, and procureth his favour; rendering us fit objects of his love, and entitling us thereto in regard

SERM. to our qualities, and recompense of our works : for God

LIV. *loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom : and, So*

Wisd. vii. *shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight*
28. *of God and man.*

Psal. v. 5.
Prov. iii. 4.

It is a calling, whereby with greatest advantage we may benefit men, and deserve well of the world ; drawing men to the knowledge and service of God, reclaiming them from error and sin, rescuing them from misery, and conducting them to happiness ; by clear instruction, by faithful admonition, by powerful exhortation. And what can be more noble, than to be the lights of the world, the guides of practice to men, the authors of so much good, so egregious benefactors to mankind ?

It is a calling most exempt from the cares, the crosses, the turmoils, the factious jars, the anxious intrigues, the vexatious molestations of the world ; its business lying out of the road of those mischiefs, wholly lying in solitary retirement, or being transacted in the most innocent and ingenuous company.

It is a calling least subject to any danger or disappointment ; wherein we may well be assured not to miscarry or lose our labour ; for the merchant indeed by manifold accidents may lose his voyage, or find a bad market ; the husbandman may plough and sow in vain : but the student hardly can fail of improving his stock, and reaping a good crop of knowledge ; especially if he study with a conscientious mind, and pious reverence to God, imploring his gracious help and blessing.

It is a calling, the industry used wherein doth abundantly recompense itself, by the pleasure and sweetness which it carrieth in it ; so that the more pains one taketh, the more delight he findeth, feeling himself proportionably to grow in knowledge, and that his work becometh continually more easy to him.

It is a calling, the business whereof doth so exercise as not to weary, so entertain as not to cloy us ; being not (as other occupations are) a drawing in a mill, or a nauseous tedious repetition of the same work ; but a continued progress toward fresh objects ; our mind not being

staked to one or a few poor matters, but having immense fields of contemplation, wherein it may everlastingly expatiate, with great proficiency and pleasure^c. SERM. LIV.

It is a calling, which doth ever afford plentiful fruit, even in regard to the conveniencies of this present and temporal state; the which sufficiently will requite the pains expended thereon: for if we be honestly industrious, we shall not want success; and succeeding we shall not want a competence of wealth, of reputation, of interest in the world: for concerning wisdom, which is the result of honest study, the Wise Man telleth us, *Riches and honour are with her, yea, durable riches and righteousness: Length of days are in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour: Exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her; she shall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.* In common experience the wealth of the mind doth qualify for employments, which have good recompenses annexed to them; and neither God nor man will suffer him long to want, who is endowed with worthy accomplishments of knowledge. It was a ridiculous providence in Nero, that if he should chance to lose his empire, he might live by fiddling: yet his motto was good; and Dionysius, another tyrant, found the benefit of it; τὸ τεχνίαν πᾶσα γαῖα τρέφει, he that hath any good art, hath therein an estate, and land in every place; he is secured against being reduced to extremity of any misfortune: *Wisdom, saith the Wise Man, is a defence, and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.* Money is a defence, of which fortune may bereave us; but wisdom is beyond its attacks, being a treasure seated in a place inaccessible to external impressions.

And as a learned man cannot be destitute of substance; so he cannot want credit, having such an ornament, than which none hath a more general estimation; and which can be of low rate only among that sort of folk, to whom

Prov. xii. 8. A man shall be commended according to his wisdom.

^c Εμπόνη δὲ εἰς πολλὰ διδασκάλους.

SERM. Solomon saith, *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?—and fools hate knowledge?* It is that which re-

LIV. commendeth a man in all company, and procureth regard,
 Prov. i. 22, every one yielding attention and acceptance to instructive,
 7. neat, apposite discourse, (that which the Scripture calleth
 Prov. xxii. 17. *acceptable, pleasant, gracious words*;) men think them-
 selves obliged thereby by receiving information and satis-
 faction from it; and accordingly *Every man*, saith the
 Prov. xxiv. 26. *Wife Man, shall kiss his lips that giveth a right answer;*
 Prov. xxii. 11. *and—for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend;*
 Eccles. x. 12. *and, the words of a wise man's mouth are gracious.* It is
 that, an eminency wherein purchaseth lasting fame, and a
 life after death, in the good memory and opinion of poster-
 ity: *Many shall commend his understanding; and so long*
 Eccles. xxxix. 9. *as the world endureth, it shall not be blotted out: his me-*
morial shall not depart away, and his name shall live from
generation to generation. A fame no less great, and far
 more innocent, than acts of chivalry and martial prowess;
 for is not Aristotle as renowned for teaching the world
 with his pen, as Alexander for conquering it with his
 sword? Is not one far oftener mentioned than the other?
 Do not men hold themselves much more obliged to the
 learning of the philosopher, than to the valour of the
 warrior? Indeed the fame of all others is indebted to the
 pains of the scholar, and could not subsist, but with and
 by his fame: *Dignum laude virum musa vetat mori*; learn-
 ing consecrateth itself and its subject together, to immor-
 tal remembrance.

It is a calling that fitteth a man for all conditions and
 fortunes; so that he can enjoy prosperity with modera-
 tion, and sustain adversity with comfort: he that loveth a
 book will never want a faithful friend, a wholesome coun-
 sellor, a cheerful companion, an effectual comforter. By
 study, by reading, by thinking, one may innocently divert
 and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all weathers, so in
 all fortunes:

In fine, it is a calling, which Solomon, who had cu-
 riously observed and exactly compared and scanned, by
 reason and by experience, all other occupations and ways

of life, did prefer above all others; and we may presume **SERM.**
would sooner have parted with his royal state, than with **LIV.**
his learning; for *Wisdom*, saith he, *is the principal thing*, **Prov. iv. 7.**
therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get under-
standing; and, *Then I saw* (then, that is, after a serious **Ecclef. ii.**
disquisition and discussion of things, I saw) *that wisdom* ^{13.}
exceedeth folly (that is, knowledge excelleth ignorance)
as light excelleth darkness.

These things and much more may be said of learning in general; but if more distinctly we survey each part, and each object of it, we shall find, that each doth yield considerable emoluments and delights; benefit to our soul, advantage to our life, satisfaction to our mind.

The observation of things, and collection of experiments, how doth it enrich the mind with ideas, and breed a kind of familiar acquaintance with all things, so that nothing doth surprise us, or strike our mind with astonishment and admiration! And if our *eye be not satisfied with* **Ecclef. i. 8.**
seeing, nor our ear filled with hearing, how much less is our mind satiated with the pleasures of speculating and observing that immense variety of objects subject to its view!

The exercise of our mind in rational discursiveness about things in quest of truth; canvassing questions, examining arguments for and against; how greatly doth it better us, fortifying our natural parts, enabling us to fix our thoughts on objects without roving, inuring us to weigh and resolve, and judge well about matters proposed; preserving us from being easily abused by captious fallacies, gulled by specious pretences, tossed about with every doubt or objection started before us!

Invention of any kind, (in discerning the causes of abstract effects, in resolving hard problems, in demonstrating theorems, in framing composures of witty description, or forcible persuasion,) how much doth it exceed the pleasure of hunting for any game, or of combating for any victory! Do any man's children so much please him, as these creatures of his brain?

The reading of books, what is it, but conversing with

SERM. the wisest men of all ages and all countries, who thereby
LIV. communicate to us their most deliberate thoughts, choicest notions, and best inventions, couched in good expression, and digested in exact method?

And as to the particular matters or objects of study, all have their use and pleasure. I shall only touch them.

The very initial studies of tongues and grammatical literature are very profitable and necessary, as the inlets to knowledge, whereby we are enabled to understand wise men speaking their sense in their own terms and lively strain, whereby especially we are assisted to drink sacred knowledge out of the fountains, the divine oracles.

Luther would not part with a little Hebrew he had for all the Turkish empire.

Rhetoric, or the art of conveying our thoughts to others by speech with advantages of clearness, force, and elegance, so as to instruct, to persuade, to delight the auditors; of how great benefit is it, if it be well used! How much may it conduce to the service of God, and edification of men! What hath been a more effectual instrument of doing good, and working wonders, not only in the world, but in the church? How many souls have been converted from error, vanity, and vice, to truth, soberness, and virtue, by an eloquent Apollon, a Basil, a Chrysostom!

*Ἄνεκ λόγιος,
καὶ δυνατός.*
Acts xviii.
24.

The perusal of history, how pleasant illumination of mind, how useful direction of life, how sprightly incentives to virtue doth it afford! How doth it supply the room of experience, and furnish us with prudence at the expence of others, informing us about the ways of action, and the consequences thereof by examples, without our own danger or trouble! How may it instruct and encourage us in piety, while therein we trace the paths of God in men, or observe the methods of divine Providence, how the Lord and Judge of the world in due season protecteth, prospereth, blesteth, rewardeth innocence and integrity; how he crosseth, defeateth, blasteth, curseth, punisheth iniquity and outrage; managing things with admirable

temper of wisdom, to the good of mankind, and advancement of his own glory!

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LIV.

The mathematical sciences, how pleasant is the speculation of them to the mind! How useful is the practice to common life! How do they whet and excite the mind! How do they inure it to strict reasoning, and patient meditation!

Natural philosophy, the contemplation of this great theatre, or visible system presented before us; observing the various appearances therein, and inquiring into their causes; reflecting on the order, connection, and harmony of things; considering their original source, and their final design: how doth it enlarge our minds, and advance them above vulgar amusements, and the admiration of those petty things, about which men cark and bicker! How may it serve to work in us pious affections of admiration, reverence, and love toward our great Creator, whose *eternal divinity is clearly seen, whose glory is declared, whose transcendent perfections and attributes of immense power, wisdom, and goodness are conspicuously displayed, whose particular kindness toward us men doth evidently shine in those his works of nature!*

Rom. i. 20.
Psal. xix. 1.
Psal. viii.

The study of moral philosophy, how exceedingly beneficial may it be to us, suggesting to us the dictates of reason, concerning the nature and faculties of our soul, the chief good and end of our life, the way and means of attaining happiness, the best rules and methods of practice; the distinctions between good and evil, the nature of each virtue, and motives to embrace it; the rank wherein we stand in the world, and the duties proper to our relations: by rightly understanding and estimating which things we may know how to behave ourselves decently and soberly toward ourselves, justly and prudently toward our neighbours; we may learn to correct our inclinations, to regulate our appetites, to moderate our passions, to govern our actions, to conduct and wield all our practice well in prosecution of our end; so as to enjoy our being and conveniences of life in constant quiet and peace, with tranquillity and satisfaction of mind!

SERM. But especially the study of theology, how numberless,
 LIV. unexpressible advantages doth it yield! For,

It enlighteneth our minds with the best knowledge concerning the most high and worthy objects, in order to the most happy end, with the firmest assurance.

It certainly and perfectly doth inform us concerning the nature and attributes, the will and intentions, the works and providence of God.

It fully declareth to us our own nature, our original, our designed end, our whole duty, our certain way of attaining eternal life and felicity.

It exactly teacheth us how we should demean ourselves in all respects piously toward God, justly and charitably toward our neighbour, soberly toward ourselves; without blame in the world, with satisfaction of our conscience, with assured hope of blessed rewards.

It proposeth those encouragements, and exhibiteth assurances of those helps, which serve potently to engage us in all good practice.

It setteth before us a most complete and lively pattern of all goodness; apt most clearly to direct, most strongly to excite, most obligingly to engage us thereto; especially instructing and inclining to the practice of the most high and hard duties, meekness, humility, patience, self-denial, contempt of all worldly vanities.

1 Pet. i. 12. It discovereth those sublime mysteries and stupendous
 Tit. iii. 4. wonders of grace, whereby God hath demonstrated an incomprehensible kindness to mankind, and our obligation to correspondent gratitude.

It representeth manifold arguments and incentives to love God with most intense affection, to confide in him with most firm assurance, to delight in him continually *with joy unspeakable*; which are the noblest, the sweetest, the happiest operations of our soul.

2 Cor. iv. 18. It reareth our hearts from vain thoughts, and mean desires concerning these poor, transitory, earthly things, to contemplations, affections, and hopes toward objects most excellent, eternal, and celestial.

It engageth us to study the book of God, the book of

books, the richest mine, of most excellent knowledge, SERM. containing infallible oracles of truth, and heavenly rules LIV. of life; *which are able to make us wise to salvation, and perfect to every good work.* (2 Tim. iii. 15.) Psal. xix. 10.

And how can we otherwise be so well employed, as in meditation about such things? What occupation doth nearer approach to that of the blessed angels? What heaven is there upon earth like to that of constantly feasting our minds and hearts in the contemplation of such objects? Especially considering that this study doth not only yield private benefit to ourselves in forwarding our own salvation, but enableth us by our guidance and encouragement to promote the eternal welfare of others, and by our endeavours to people heaven, according to that exhortation of St. Paul pressing on Timothy this study with diligence: *Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.* 1 Tim. iv. 16.

So considerable is each part of learning, so extremely profitable are some parts of it. Indeed the skill of any liberal art is valuable, as a handsome ornament, as an harmless divertisement, as an useful instrument upon occasions; as preferable to all other accomplishments and advantages of person or fortune, (beauty, strength, wealth, power, or the like;) for who would not purchase any kind of such knowledge at any rate; who would sell it for any price; who would not choose rather to be deformed or impotent in his body, than to have a misshapen and weak mind; to have rather a lank purse, than an empty brain; to have no title at all, than no worth to bear it out; if any would, he is not of Solomon's mind; for of wisdom (by which he meaneth a comprehension of all knowledge, divine and human; into which the knowledge of natural things, of mathematics, of poetry, are reckoned ingredients) he saith, *The merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold; she is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou* 1 Kings iv. 29— Prov. iii. 14. viii. 11.

84 *Of Industry in our particular Calling, as Scholars.*

SERM. *canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Her fruit is*

LIV. *better than gold, yea than fine gold; and her revenue than choice silver.*

Prov. viii.

19. xvi. 16.

xx. 13. iv. 7.

Now then, considering all these advantages of our calling, if we by our negligence or sluggishness therein do lose them, are we not very ingrateful to God, who gave them, as with a gracious intent for our good, so with expectation that we should improve them to his service? If God had allotted to us the calling of rustics, or of artificers, we had been impious in not diligently following it; but we are abominably ingrateful in neglecting this most incomparably excellent vocation.

Are we not extremely defective to ourselves, if indulging a wretched humour of laziness we will not enjoy those sweet pleasures, nor embrace those great profits to which God in mercy calleth us?

Prov. xix. 8. If Solomon said true, *He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul, he that keepeth understanding shall find good*; how little friends are we to ourselves, how neglectful of our own welfare, by not using the means of getting wisdom!

Prov. xv.
14.

The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge, saith Solomon; what a fool then is he that shunneth it! who, though it be his way, and his special duty to seek it, yet neglecteth it; choosing rather to do nothing, or to do worse.

And do we not deserve great blame, displeasure, and disgrace from mankind, if, having such opportunities of qualifying ourselves to do good, and serve the public, we by our idleness render ourselves worthless and useless?

How, being slothful in our business, can we answer for our violating the wills, for abusing the goodness, for perverting the charity and bounty of our worthy founders and benefactors, who gave us the good things we enjoy, not to maintain us in idleness, but for supports and encouragements of our industry? how can we excuse ourselves from dishonesty, and perfidious dealing, seeing that we are admitted to these enjoyments under condition, and upon confidence (confirmed by our free promises, and

most solemn engagements) of using them according to their pious intent, that is, in a diligent prosecution of our studies, in order to the service of God, and of the public? SERM.
LIV.

Let every Scholar, when he mispendeth an hour, or sluggeth on his bed, but imagine that he heareth the voice of those glorious kings, or venerable prelates, or worthy gentlemen, complaining thus, and rating him: Why, sluggard, dost thou against my will possess my estate? why dost thou presume to occupy the place due to an industrious person? why dost thou forget, or despise thy obligations to my kindness? thou art an usurper, a robber, or a purloiner of my goods, which I never intended for such as thee; I challenge thee of wrong to myself, and of sacrilege toward my God, to whose service I devoted those his gifts to me.

How reproachful will it be to us, if that expostulation may concern us, *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?* Prov. xvii.
16.

If to be a dunce or a bungler in any profession be shameful, how much more ignominious and infamous to a Scholar to be such? from whom all men expect; that he should excel in intellectual abilities, and be able to help others by his instruction and advice.

Nothing surely would more grate on the heart of one, that hath a spark of ingenuity, of modesty, of generous good nature, than to be liable to such an imputation.

To avoid it therefore, (together with all the guilt and all the mischiefs attending on sloth,) let each of us, in God's name, carefully mind his business; and let the grace and blessing of God prosper you therein. *Amen.*

SERMON LV.

THE UNSEARCHABLENESS OF GOD'S JUDGMENTS.

ROM. xi. 33.

*How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past
finding out !*

SERM.
LV.

THESE words are the close of a disputation, wherein St. Paul was engaged with the advocates of Judaism, concerning God's providence toward his ancient people, in rejecting the greatest part of them, upon their refusal to embrace the Christian doctrine; and in admitting the Gentile world to favour, upon its compliance with the overtures thereof proposed in the Gospel. In this proceeding those infidels could not discern God's hand, nor would allow such a dispensation worthy of him, advancing several exceptions against it: God, said they, having espoused and consecrated us to himself; having to our fathers, in regard to their piety, made so absolute promises of benediction on their posterity; having consequently endowed us with such privileges and choice pledges of his favour; having taken so much pains with us, and performed so great things in our behalf; having so long avowed, supported, and cherished us; how can it well consist with his wisdom, with his justice, with his fidelity, with his constancy, thus instantly to abandon and repudiate us? Doth not this dealing argue his former affections to have been misplaced? Doth it not implead his

ancient covenant and law of imperfection? Doth it not **SERM.**
supplant his own designs, and unravel all that he for so **LV.**
many ages hath been doing? Upon such accounts did
this dispensation appear very strange and scandalous to
them: but St. Paul, being infallibly assured of its truth,
doth undertake to vindicate it from all misprisions, render-
ing a fair account of it, and assigning for it many satis-
factory reasons, drawn from the general equity of the
case, from the nature of God, his attributes, and his rela-
tions to men; from the congruity of this proceeding to
the tenour of God's providence, to his most ancient pur-
poses, to the true intent of his promises, to his express
declarations and predictions; to the state of things in the
world, and the pressing needs of all mankind: such rea-
sons (I say, which I have not time more explicitly to re-
late) doth the Apostle produce in favour of this great
dispensation; the which did suffice to clear and justify it
from all their objections: yet notwithstanding, after that
he had steered his discourse through all these rocks, he
thought it safe to cast anchor; winding up the contest in
this modest intimation, that whatever he could say,
might not perhaps exhaust the difficulty, or void all
scruple; that therefore in this, and in all such cases, for
entire satisfaction, we should have recourse to the incom-
prehensible wisdom of God, who frequently in the course
of his providence doth act upon grounds, and ordereth
things in methods, transcending our ability to discover or
trace: to consider some causes and reasons of which in-
comprehensibility, and to ground thereon some practical
advices, will be the scope of my discourse: the reasons
may be these:

1. As the dealings of very wise men sometimes are
founded upon maxims, and admit justifications, not ob-
vious nor penetrable by vulgar conceit; so may God act
according to rules of wisdom and justice, which it may
be quite impossible by our faculties to apprehend, or with
our means to descry.

As there are natural modes of being and operation,
(such as God's necessary subsistence, his production of

SERM. things from nothing, his eternity without succession, his
LV. immensity without extension, his prescience without ne-

cessitation of events, his ever acting, but never changing; and the like,) so there may be prudential and moral rules of proceeding far above our reach; so God himself
 Isa. lv. 9. telleth us: *As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Some of them we may be incapable to know, because of our finite nature; they being peculiar objects of divine wisdom, and not to be understood by any creature: for as God cannot impart the power of doing all things possible, so may he not communicate the faculty of knowing all things intelligible; that being indeed to ungod himself, or to deprive himself of his peerless supremacy in wisdom; hence is he styled *the only wise God*; hence is he said to *dwell in light inaccessible*; hence he *chargeth the angels with folly*; hence the most illuminate seraphims do veil their faces before him.

1 Tim. i.
 17.
 Rom. xvi.
 27.
 Jude 25.
 1 Tim. vi.
 16.
 Job iv. 18.
 Isa. vi. 2.

Other such rules we may not be able to perceive from the meanness of our nature, or our low rank among creatures: for beneath omniscience there being innumerable forms of intelligence, in the lowest of these we sit, one remove from beasts; being endowed with capacities suitable to that inferior station, and to those meaner employments, for which we were designed and framed; whence our mind hath a pitch, beyond which it cannot soar; and things clearly intelligible to more noble creatures, moving in a higher orb, may be dark and unexplicable to us:

Pf. ciii. 20.
 2 Pet. ii.
 11.

2 Sam. xiv. *As an angel of God, so is my lord the king, to discern good*
 17, 20. xix. *and bad*, was an expression importing this difference, how those glorious creatures do overtop us in intellectual capacities.

2 Sam. xiv.
 17, 20. xix.
 27.

Also divers notions not simply passing our capacity to know, we are not yet in condition to ken, by reason of our circumstances here, in this dark corner of things, to which we are confined, and wherein we lie under many disadvantages of attaining knowledge. He that is shut up in a close place, and can only peep through chinks, who standeth in a valley, and hath his prospect inter-

cepted, who is encompassed with fogs, who hath but a SERM.
 dusky light to view things by, whose eyes are weak or LV.
 foul, how can he see much or far; how can he discern
 things remote, minute, or subtile, clearly and distinctly?
 Such is our case; our mind is pent up in the body, and
 looketh only through those clefts by which objects strike
 our sense; its intuition is limited within a very small com-
 pass; it resideth in an atmosphere of fancy, stuffed with
 exhalations from temper, appetite, passion, interest; its
 light is scant and faint, (for sense and experience do reach
 only some few gross matters of fact; light infused, and
 revelation imparted to us, proceed from arbitrary dispen-
 sation, in definite measures;) our ratiocination conse-
 quently from such principles must be very short and de-
 fective; nor are our minds ever thoroughly sound, or pure
 and defecate from prejudices; hence no wonder, that
 now we are wholly ignorant of divers great truths, or
 have but a glimmering notion of them, which we may
 and hereafter shall come fully and clearly to understand;
 so that even Apostles, the secretaries of heaven, might
 say, *We know in part, and we prophecy in part; we now* 1 Cor. xiii.
see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. 9, 12.

In fine, those rules of equity or expedience, which we
 in our transactions with one another do use, (being de-
 rived from our original inclinations to like some good
 things, or from notions stamped on our soul when God
 made us according to his image, from common experi-
 ence, from any kind of rational collection, from the pre-
 scription of God's word,) if they be applied to the deal-
 ings of God, will be found very incongruous, or deficient;
 the case being vastly altered, from that infinite distance in
 nature and state between God and us; and from the im-
 mense differences which his relations toward us have from
 our relations to one another.

Wherefore in divers inquiries about Providence, to
 which our curiosity will stretch itself, it is impossible for
 us to be resolved; and launching into them, we shall soon
 get out of our depth, so as to swim in dissatisfaction, or
 to sink into distrust: Why God made the world at such

SERM. LV. an instant, no sooner or later; why he made it thus, not exempt from all disorder; why he framed man (the prince of visible creatures) so fallible and frail, so prone to sin, so liable to misery; why so many things happen offensive to him, why his gifts are distributed with such inequality? Such questions we are apt to propound and to debate; but the resolution of them our mind perhaps was not made to apprehend, nor in its most elevated condition shall attain it: however in this state we by no means can come at it; it at least being kept close from us among those things, of which it is said, *the secret things belong unto the Lord our God, in distinction from others, about which it is added, but those that are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever.*

In such cases the absolute will, the sovereign authority, the pure liberality of God do supply the place of reasons; sufficient, if not to satisfy the minds of men fondly curious, yet to stop the mouths of those who are boldly peremptory: the which are alleged, not with intent to imply that God ever acteth unaccountably, or without highest reason, but that sometimes his methods of acting are not fit subjects of our conception or discussion; for otherwhile God appealeth to the verdict of our reason; when the case is such that we can apprehend it, and the apprehension of it may conduce to good purposes.

2. As the standing rules of God's acting, so the occasional grounds thereof are commonly placed beyond the sphere of our apprehension.

God is obliged to prosecute his own immutable decrees; *working all things, as the Apostle saith, according to the counsel of his own will; which how can we anywise come to discover? Can we climb up above the heaven of heavens, and there unlock his closet, rifle his cabinet, and peruse the records of everlasting destiny, by which the world is governed? No; Who knoweth his mind, or hath been his counsellor? Who, saith the Prophet, hath stood in the counsel of the Lord; or hath perceived and heard his word?*

He doth *search the hearts, and try the reins of men*; he doth *weigh their spirits, and their works*; he doth *know their frame*, he doth *understand their thoughts afar off*^a; he perceiveth their closest intentions, their deepest contrivances, their most retired behaviours; he consequently is acquainted with their true qualifications, capacities, and merits; unto which he most justly and wisely doth accommodate his dealings with them; the which therefore must often thwart the opinions and expectations of us, who are ignorant of those particulars, and can only view the exterior face or semblance of things: for (as Samuel, in the case of preferring David before his brethren, did say) *God seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.* ^{1 Sam. xvi. 7.}

God also hath a perfect foresight of contingent events; he seeth upon what pin each wheel moveth, and with what weight every scale will be turned; he discerneth all the connections, all the entanglements of things, and what the result will be upon the combination, or the clashing of numberless causes; in correspondence to which perceptions he doth order things consistently and conveniently; whereas we being stark blind, or very dim-sighted in such respects, (seeing nothing future, and but few things present,) cannot apprehend what is fit and feasible; or why that is done, which appeareth done to us. ^{Isa. xlv. 11.}

God observeth in what relations, and what degrees of comparison, (as to their natures, their virtues, their consequences,) all things do stand, each toward others; so poising them in the balance of right judgment, as exactly to distinguish their just weight and worth: whereas we cannot tell what things to compare, we know not how to put them into the scale, we are unapt to make due allowances, we are unable to discern which side doth overweigh: in the immense variety of objects our knowledge

^a Prov. xvi. 2. Isa. xxvi. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 3. Psal. ciii. 14. cxxxix. 2. lxiv. 6. Job. xiv. 16.

Ἡμεῖς μὲν γὰρ μόνα ἰδῶμεν τὰ πράγματα· ὁ δὲ τῶν ὅλων Θεὸς, καὶ τῶν ταῦτα δρῶντων ἰσχύων, τοὺς σκοποὺς, καὶ τούτῳ μᾶλλον, ἢ τοῖς ἔργοις διακρίνει ἐκείνους τῇ ψήφῳ. Theod. Ep. 3.

SERM. doth extend to few things eligible, nor among them can
LV. we pick out the best competitors for our choice: hence often must we be at great losses in scanning the designs, or tracing the footsteps of Providence.

3. We are also incapable thoroughly to discern the ways of Providence from our moral defects, in some measure common to all men; from our stupidity, our sloth, our temerity, our impatience, our impurity of heart, our perverseness of will and affections: we have not the perspicacity to espy the subtle tracks and secret reserves of divine wisdom; we have not the industry, with steady application of mind, to regard and meditate on God's works; we have not the temper and patience to wait upon God, until he discover himself in the accomplishment of his purposes; we have not that *blest purity of heart*, which is requisite to the *seeing God* in his special dispensations; we have not that rectitude of will and government of our passions, as not to be scandalized at what God doeth, if it thwarteth our conceit or humour: such defects are observable in the best men; who therefore have misapprehended, have disrelished, have fretted and murmured at the proceedings of God: we might instance in Job, in David, in Elias, in Jonah, in the holy Apostles themselves, by whose speeches and deportments in some cases, it may appear how difficult it is for us, who have *eyes of flesh*, as Job speaketh, and hearts too never quite freed of carnality, to see through, or fully to acquiesce in the dealings of God.

It is indeed a distemper incident to us, which we can hardly shun, or cure, that we are apt to measure the equity and expedience of things according to our opinions and passions; affecting consequently to impose on God our silly imaginations as rules of his proceeding, and to constitute him the executioner of our sorry passions: what we conceit fit to be done, that we take God bound to perform; when we feel ourselves stirred, then we presume God must be alike concerned: to our apprehensions every slight inconvenience is a huge calamity, every scratch of fortune is a ghastly wound; God therefore, we think,

should have prevented it, or must presently remove it; every pitiful bauble, every trivial accommodation is a matter of high consequence, which if God withhold, we are ready to clamour on him, and wail as children for want of a trifle. Are we soundly angry, or inflamed with zeal? then *fire must come down from heaven*, then thunderbolts must fly about, then nothing but sudden woe and vengeance are denounced: Are we pleased? then showers of blessings must descend on the heads, then floods of wealth must run into the laps of our favourites, otherwise we are not satisfied; and scarce can deem God awake, or mindful of his charge. We do beyond measure hate or despise some persons, and to those God must not afford any favour, any mercy, any forbearance, or time of repentance; we excessively admire or dote on others, and those God must not touch or cross: if he doth not proceed thus, he is in danger to forfeit his authority: he must hardly be allowed to govern the world, in case he will not square his administrations to our fond conceit, or forward humour: hence no wonder, that men often are stumbled about Providence; for God will not rule according to their fancy or pleasure, (it would be a mad world if he should,) neither indeed could he do so if he would, their judgments and their desires being infinitely various, inconsistent, and repugnant. Again,

4. The nature of those instruments which divine Providence doth use in administration of human affairs, hindereth us from discerning it: it is an observation among philosophers, that the footsteps of divine wisdom are, to exclusion of doubt, far more conspicuous in the works of nature, than in the management of our affairs^b; so that some who by contemplation of natural appear-

^b Nam cum dispositi quævissem fœdera mundi,

Præscriptoque mari fines ———

—————tunc omnia rebar

Consilio firmata Dei ———

Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi

Adspicetem ———

—————rursus labefacta cadebat

Religio, &c.

Clayd. in Russ. 1.

SERM. ances were convinced of God's existence, and his protec-
LV. tion of the world, (who thence could not doubt but that

Diod. Sic. l. courses, had formed the bodies and souls of animals, had
xv. p. 482.

provided for the subsistence and propagation of each species, had settled and doth uphold the visible world in its so comely and convenient state, that even such men,) reflecting on the course of human transactions, have staggered into distrust, whether a divine wisdom doth sit at the helm of our affairs; many thence hardly would admit God to be concerned in them, but supposed him to commit their conduct to a fatal swinge, or a casual fluctuation of obvious causes: one great reason of this difference may be, that whereas the instruments of divine power in nature are in themselves merely passive, or act only as they are acted by pure necessity, (as a pen in writing, or a hammer in striking,) being thence determinate, uniform, constant, and certain in their operation; whenever there any footsteps of counsel, any tendency to an end, and deviation from the common tracks of motion do appear, such effects cannot reasonably be imputed merely to natural causes, but to a superior wisdom, wielding them in such a manner, and steering them to such a mark: but the visible engines of Providence in our affairs are self-moving agents, working with knowledge and choice; the which, as in themselves they are indeterminate, irregular, and uncertain; so they are capable to be diversified in numberless unaccountable ways, according to various representations of objects, or by influence of divers principles inclining to judge and choose differently: temper, humour, passion, prejudice, custom, example, together with contingencies of occasion, (depending on like principles in adjacent free causes,) do move, singly or combinedly, in ways so implicate, to the production of so various events, that nothing hardly can fall out, which may not with some plausible colour of reason be derived from some one of those sources, or from a complication of them: nothing can appear so uncouth or extravagant,

which may not be fathered on some fetch of wit, or some hit of fancy, or some capricio of humour, or some transport of passion, or some lucky advantage, or on divers of those conspiring; whence in accounting for the reason of such events, men deem they may leave out Providence as superfluous; especially considering, that usually disorders and defects, only imputable to man's will, do accompany and further such events.

For instance, what other cause would many think needful to assign for the conveyance of Joseph into Egypt, than the envy of his brethren; for Shimei's reviling David, than his base malignity; for David's numbering the people, than his wanton pride; for Jeroboam's revolt, than his unruly ambition; for Job's being robbed, than the thievish disposition of the Arabs; for his being diseased, than a redundancy of bad humours; for our Lord's suffering, than the spiteful rage of the Jewish rulers and people; together with the treacherous avarice of Judas, and the corrupt easiness of Pilate? These events all of them are ascribed to God's hand and special ordination; but men could not see or avow it in them: what need, will men ever say, in such cases to introduce God's aid, when human means suffice to achieve the feat?

5. Indeed, as in nature, the influences of heaven, and of inferior causes, so commonly in the production of these events, divine and human agency are so knit and twisted one with the other, that it is not easy to discriminate them, so as to sever the bounds of common and special Providence; or to discern what God performeth by natural instruments, what by superior efficacy; when the balance turneth from our inclinations, when it is cast from a grain thrown in by divine interposition; the management of these affairs being a concert, wherein God's wisdom beareth one part, man's free-will playeth another; fortune and occasion also do strike in; we not seeing the first, are prone to ascribe all the harmony to the last, which are most obvious and visible.

^c Οὐκ ἐστὶν πάντα, καὶ μὴτὰ Θεὸν τύχη καὶ καὶρὸς τὰ ἀνθρώπινα κυβερνῶσι ξύμπτουσι. *Max. Tyr. diff. 3. e Plat.*

SERM. 6. The more apt we are to do thus, because the manner of divine efficacy is ever very soft and gentle: God disposeth things *fortiter et suaviter*; so as effectually to perform what he designeth, but in the most sweet and easy way: his providence doth not hurry along like an impetuous rumbling torrent, but glideth on as a smooth and still current, with an irresistible but imperceptible force carrying things down therewith: without much ado, without any clatter, by a nod of his head, by a whisper of his mouth, by a turn of his hand, he doth effect his purposes: winding up a close spring, he setteth the greatest wheels in motion; and thrusting in an insensible spoke, he stoppeth the greatest wheels in their career; injecting a thought, exciting an humour, presenting an occasion, insinuating a petty accident, he bringeth about the most notable events. He doth so *fashion the hearts of men*, so *manage their hands*, so *guide their steps*, that even they who are acted by him cannot feel the least touch upon them. For, *the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters; he turneth it wheresoever he will*; that is, by secret pipes, by obscure channels, God conveyeth the minds and wills of greatest persons (the chief engines of his providence) unto such points of resolution as he pleaseth, so that they seem to flow thither of their own accord, without any exterior direction or impulse: hence do his most effectual operations slip by us without making impression on our minds, which are wont to apprehend things, as with a gross palpability they do incur the senses, so that the Preacher, comparing the methods of Providence with the most occult proceedings in nature, might well say, *As thou knowest not the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all.* Again,

7. God, in his progress toward the achievement of any design, is not wont to go in the most direct and compendious ways, but commonly windeth about, and taketh a large compass, enfolding several other coincident purposes, some whereof may be no less considerable, than is

Wisd. viii. 1.
 εὐφραίνεται καὶ
 χαίρει.

Θεὸς ἔργους
 ἐκτελέσσωντος
 αὐτοῦ τοῦτον αὐτοῦ
 ὁρατός.
 Plat. Timol.

Psal. xxxiii.
 15.
 Isa. xli. 13.
 xlii. 6.
 Prov. xvi.
 9. xx. 24.
 Jer. x. 23.
 Job. xxxiii.
 14. xxiii.
 8.
 Prov. xxi.
 1.

Ecclef. xi.
 5.

that, which we deem most necessary, and affect to see dispatched: but this course seemeth tedious to us, who have not the wit to perceive that complexion of ends, nor the temper to wait for the completion of them. If God, when we seem to need, doth not instantly appear in our favour and succour; if he doth not presently vindicate truth and right; if he doth not nip wicked designs in the bud, and repress the first onsets of outrageous violence; if for a while he suffereth the *tabernacles of robbers to prosper*, and *iniquity to lift up its horn*; then he is in a slumber, quite unmindful or insensible of us; then he turneth aside his face, or doth behold what passeth as an unconcerned spectator; then he standeth aloof, unready to help us; then doth he hold off his hand, not meddling in our affairs: in such cases we are apt to cry out, *Estis ubi? O Sil. Ital. superi!* ^d *How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget; how long wilt thou hide thy face? Lord, how long wilt thou look on? Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? why standest thou afar off? why withdrawest thou thy hand? Pluck it out of thy bosom: Return, O Lord, how long?* Such are our prayers, such our expostulations; so is our blind impatience prone to muse and mutter; not considering how many good designs God is carrying on in a calm and steady pace, by well measured steps, all which, in due season, when they are ripe for accomplishment, shall undoubtedly be effected; for, *The Lord*, as St. Peter saith, (Jer. xxiii. 20.) *is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering toward all men*; that is, he ^{2 Pet. iii. 9, 10.} certainly will express his faithful benignity toward good men, yet so as also to extend his merciful patience toward others; he so will tender the interests of some, as concurrently to procure the welfare of all, and accordingly will time his proceedings, allowing the leisure and opportunities requisite thereto: he can, although we cannot, *wait* ^{Isa. xxx. 18.} *to be gracious*; for as in him there are no passions to pre-

^d Psal. xiii. 1. lxxxix. 46. xc. 13. lxxiv. 10. xliv. 24. lv. 1. xciv. 3. xxxv. 17. xlv. 23. xxxv. 28. vii. 6. lxxiv. 11. x. 1. xc. 13. vi. 4. vii. 7. lxxx. 14. xxii. 1. xi. 19. xxxviii. 2. lxxi. 12. Vid. Hab. i. 2.

SERM. cipitate action, so to him there are no sensible differences
 LV. of time, *one day being with the Lord, as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

8. Again, God (as is the property of every wise agent) is wont to act variously, according to the state and circumstances of things, or to the dispositions and capacities of persons; so as to do the same thing for different ends, and different things for the same end; to apply one instrument to several uses, and by several instruments to work out one purpose: so he afflicteth good men out of love, for trial and improvement of their virtues, bad men in displeasure, to illustrate his power and justice on them; he encourageth and blesteth the one, he punisheth and curseth the other with prosperity; he reclaimeth both from error and sin by either of those methods, as their temper and their circumstances do require. Whence it is very difficult for us ever from the kind of accidents befalling men, to divine how far God is concerned in them, or to what particular scope they are aimed; so that well might the Preacher, upon a careful observation of such occurrences, establish this rule, *No man knoweth love or hatred* (that is, the special regard of God toward men) *by all that is before them; because, all things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.* Farther,

9. There are different ends which Providence in various order and measure doth pursue, which we, by reason of our dim insight and short prospect, cannot descry: God, as the universal and perpetual governor of the world, in his dispensation of things, respecteth not only the good of this or that person, of one nation or one age; but often in some degree waving that, or taking care for it in a less remarkable way, hath a provident regard to the more extensive good of a whole people, of the world, of posterity; as he did order his friend Abraham to wander in a strange land for the benefit of his seed; Joseph to be sold, calumniated, and fettered for the preservation of his family; our Lord to suffer those grievous things for the redemption of mankind; the Jews to be rejected for

Ecclef. ix.
1, 2.

Hab. iii. 6.

the salvation of the Gentiles : in such cases purblind men, observing events to cross particular and present ends, but not being aware how conducive they may prove to general, remote, and more important designs, can hardly be satisfied how God should be concerned in them ; the present, or that which lieth adjacent just under our nose, is all that we can or will consider ; and therefore must be ill judges of what is done by all-provident wisdom.

SERM.
LV.

10. Again, God permitteth things, bad in their own nature, with regard to their instrumental use and tendency ; for that often the worst things may be ordainable to the best ends ; things very bitter may work pleasant effects ; upon the wildest stock divine husbandry can ingraft most excellent fruit ; sin really, and suffering reputedly, are the worst evils, yet from them much glory to God and great benefit to men do accrue ; even from the most wicked act that ever was committed, from the most lamentable event that ever did happen, fruits admirably glorious and immensely beneficial did spring ; yet usually so blind are we as to be offended at such things, and from them to raise exceptions against Providence.

11. Also the expediency of things to be permitted or crossed, doth frequently consist, not in themselves singly taken, as particular acts or events, but in their conjunction, or reference to others, with which they may become subservient toward a common end ; so that divers things in themselves extremely bad may by combination or collision engender good effects ; and thence prove fit weapons or tools of Providence ; as the most deadly poisons may be so mixed, that curbing one another's force, they may constitute a harmless mass, sometimes a wholesome medicine : but we poring on the simple ingredients, and not considering how they may be tempered, or how applied by a skilful hand, can hardly deem the toleration of them congruous to wisdom. Farther,

12. That Providence sometimes is obscure and intricate, may be attributed to the will of God, upon divers good

SERM. accounts designing it to be such: *Verily, saith the Prophet, thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.*

Isa. xlv. 15.
Pf. lxxxix.
46.

God commonly doth not intend to exert his hand notoriously; for that whereas every special interposition of his hand is in effect a miracle, (surmounting the natural power, or thwarting the ordinary course of inferior causes,) it doth not become him to prostitute his miraculous power, or to exert it otherwise than upon singular occasions, and for most weighty causes: it is not conformable to the tenour of his administrations to convince men against their will, or by irresistible evidence to wring persuasion from stubborn or stupid minds; but to exercise the wisdom, and to prove the ingenuity of well disposed persons, who upon competent intimations shall be capable to spell out, and forward to approve his proceedings.

13. He will not glare forth in discoveries so bright as to dazzle, to confound our weak sight; therefore he veileth his face with a cloud, and wrappeth his power in some obscurity; therefore *clouds and darkness are round about him: he maketh darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him is dark waters and thick clouds of the sky.*

Hab. iii. 4.
Psal. xcvi.
2. xviii. 11.

14. He meaneth thereby to improve and exalt our faith, being the less seen, that he may be the more believed; faith never rising higher than when it doth soar to objects beyond our sight; when we can approve God's wisdom and justice in occurrences surmounting our conceit; when we can rely upon God's word and help, although the stream of his proceedings seemeth to cross our hopes.

15. It is fit also that God many times designedly should act in ways surpassing our apprehension, and apt to baffle or puzzle our reason, that he may appear God indeed, infinitely transcending us in perfection of wisdom and justice; or that we, comprehending the reason of his actings, may not imagine our wisdom comparable, our justice commensurate to his; yea, that we in those respects

do exceed him; for *That*, as Tertullian discourseth, **SERM.**
which may be seen, is less than the eyes that survey it; LV.
that which may be comprehended, is less than the hands
that grasp it; that which may be valued, is less than the
senses which rate it. It is God's being inestimable that
 makes him worthily esteemed^e; his being incomprehensible
 rendereth him adorable.

16. The obscurity of Providence doth indeed conciliate
 an awful reverence toward it; for darkness naturally
 raiseth a dread of invisible powers; we use to go on
 tremblingly, when we cannot see far about us; we re-
 gard none so much as those, whose wisdom we find to
 overreach ours, and whose intentions we cannot sound:
 it was Elihu's observation, *With God is terrible majesty; Job xxxvii.*
the Almighty, we cannot find him out;—men do therefore 22, 23, 24.
fear him.

17. It is also requisite, that God should dispose many
 occurrences, cross to our vulgar notions, and offensive to
 our carnal sense, that we may thence be prompted to
 think of God, driven to seek him, engaged to mark him
 interposing in our affairs: men from disorderly and sur-
 prising accidents preposterously do conceive doubts about
 Providence, as if it managing things, nothing odd, or
 amiss, would occur; whereas if no such events did start
 up, they might be proner to question it, they would at
 least come to forget or neglect it; for if human transac-
 tions passed on as do the motions of nature, in a smooth
 course, without any rub or disturbance, men commonly
 would no more think of God than they do when they
 behold the sun rising, the rivers running, the sea flowing;
 they would not depend on his protection, or have re-
 course to him for succour: it is difficulty and distress
 seizing on them, which compel men to implore God for
 relief, which dispose them to see his hand reaching it forth

^e Quod videri communiter, quod comprehendere, quod aestimari potest,
 minus est oculis quibus occupatur, et manibus quibus contaminatur, et sen-
 sibus quibus invenitur. *Tert. Apol. 17.*

^f Hoc est quod Deum aestimari facit, dum aestimari non capit. *Tert.*
 16.

SERM. unto them; according to that in the Psalm; *When he slew*
LV. *them, then they sought him; they returned and inquired*
Pl. lxxviii. *early after God; they remembered that God was their rock,*
84, 85. *and the most high God their redeemer. Again,*

18. It is needful that the present course of Providence should not be transparently clear and satisfactory, that we may be well assured concerning a future account, and forced in our thoughts to recur thither for a resolution of all such emergent doubts and difficulties: for if all accounts were apparently stated and discharged here; if now right did ever prevail, and iniquity were suppressed; if virtue were duly crowned, and vice deservedly scourged, who would hope or fear an after-reckoning?

This indeed is the grand cause, why Providence now doth appear so cloudy, that men consider not how our affairs have no complete determination, or final issue here; things now are doing, and not done; in a progress and tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a state of consistence and perfection; this not being the place of deciding causes or dispensing rewards; but a state of probation, of work, of travail, of combat, of running for the prize, of sowing toward the harvest; a state of liberty to follow our own choice, and to lay the ground of our doom; of falling into sin, and of rising thence by repentance; of God's exercising patience, and exhibiting mercy:

Chrys. tom. wherefore as we cannot well judge of an artificial work
vii. p. 15. by its first draughts, or of a poem by a few scenes, but must stay till all be finished or acted through; so we cannot here clearly discern the entire congruity of providential dispensations to the divine attributes; the catastrophe or utmost resolution of things is the general judg-

Rom. ii. 7. ment, wherein the deep wisdom, the exact justice, the perfect goodness of God will be displayed to the full satisfaction or conviction of all men; when God's honour will be thoroughly vindicated, his despised patience and his abused grace will be avenged; every case will be rightly tried, every work will be justly recompensed, all accounts will be set straight; in the mean time divers

things must occur, unaccountable to us, looking upon **SERM.**
things as they now stand absolutely before us, without **LV.**
reference to that day; considering this may induce us
to suspend our opinion about such matters, allowing
God to go through with his work before we censure it,
not being so quick and precipitate as to forestal his
judgment: and surely, would we but observe that rea-
sonable advice of St. Paul, *Judge nothing before the time,* ^{1 Cor. iv.}
until the Lord come, our chief doubts would be resolved,^{5.}
our shrewdest exceptions against Providence would be
voided.

These are the chief reasons of the point, which medita-
tion did suggest; upon it (for it is not a point merely
speculative, but pregnant with useful consequences) divers
practical applications may be grounded, which the time
scarcely will allow me to name.

1. It should render us modest and sober in our judg-
ment about providential occurrences, not pretending tho-
roughly to know the reasons of God's proceedings, or to **Eccius. iii.**
define the consequences of them; for it is plainly fond ^{20.}
arrogance, or profane imposture, to assume perfect skill in **Psal. cxxxi.**
that which passeth our capacity to learn.^{1.}

2. It should make us staunch and cautious of grounding
judgment or censure upon present events about any cause,
or any person; for it is notorious temerity to pass sen- **Luke xiii. 1.**
tence upon grounds incapable of evidence.

3. It should repress wanton curiosity, which may trans- **Job xi. 12.**
port us beyond our bounds in speculation of these myste- **Wisd. ix.**
rious intrigues; so that we shall lose our labour and time, **Psal. lxxiii.**
shall discompose our minds, shall plunge ourselves into **Job xlii. 3.**
vain errors or anxious doubts.

4. It should keep us from conceitedness and confi- **Job xl. 4.**
dence in our own wisdom; for how can we conceit highly **xlii. 2.**
of that, or much confide in it, which we find so unable **Psal. lxxiii.**
to penetrate the reason of most common and obvious **xxix. 9.**
appearances; so nonplust in its inquiries, so defeated
in its expectations, so mistaken in its judgments of
things?

5. It should preserve us from infidelity, and from de-

SERM. despair upon account of any cross accidents occurring here;
LV. for it is unreasonable to disbelieve a notion, otherwise well grounded, because we cannot afford scruples or cavils drawn from matters inscrutable to us; it is foolish to despair of a good event upon appearances, whereof we cannot apprehend the full reason, or final result.

2 Kings xx. 9. 6. It should prevent our taking offence, or being discontented at any events rising up before us; for to be displeased at that, which a superior wisdom, unsearchable to us, doth order, is to be displeased at we know not what, or why, which is childish weakness; to fret and wail at that, which, for all we can see, proceedeth from good intention, and tendeth to good issue, is pitiful forwardness.

Ecclef. viii. 11. 7. It should guard us from security, or from presuming upon impunity for our miscarriages; for seeing God doth not always clearly and fully discover his mind, it is vain from God's reservedness to conclude his unconcernedness; or because he is now patient, that he never will be just in chastising our offences.

Isa. xxvi. 11. v. 12. 8. It should quicken our industry in observing and considering the works of Providence; for since they are not easily discernible, and the discerning them in some measure is sometimes of great use, it is needful that we be very diligent in contemplation of them; the fainter our light is, the more attent we should be in looking; the knottier the subject, the more earnest should be our study on it.

9. It should oblige us to be circumspect and wary in our conversation; for the darker the way is, the more careful should be our walking therein, lest we err, lest we stumble, lest we strike on somewhat hurtful to us.

Jer. x. 23. 10. It should engage us constantly to seek God, and to depend on him, for the protection and conduct of his grace, which is the only clue that can lead us safely through this intricate labyrinth of worldly contingencies.

Psal. xxxvi. 6. xcii. 5. 11. In fine, it should cause us humbly to admire and adore that wisdom, which governeth the world in ways

no less great and wonderful, than just and holy: for, SERM.
Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Al- LV.
mighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou King of Apoc. xv.
Saints. 3. xix. 2.

*Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invifible, the
only wife God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.
Amen.*

SERMON LVI.

OF OBEDIENCE TO OUR SPIRITUAL GUIDES AND GOVERNORS.

HEB. xiii. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

SERM. LVI. OBEDIENCE unto spiritual guides and governors is a duty of great importance; the which to declare and press is very seasonable for these times, wherein so little regard is had thereto: I have therefore pitched on this text, being an apostolical precept, briefly and clearly enjoining that duty; and in it we shall consider and explain these two particulars: 1. The persons to whom obedience is to be payed. 2. What that obedience doth import, or wherein it consisteth: and together with explication of the duty, we shall apply it, and urge its practice.

Heb. xiii.
7, 17.

I. As to the persons, unto whom obedience is to be performed, they are, generally speaking, all spiritual guides, or governors of the Church, (those *who speak to us the word of God, and who watch for our souls*, as they are described in the context,) expressed here by a term very significant and apposite, as implying fully the nature of their charge, the qualification of their persons, their rank, and privileges in the Church, together consequently with the grounds of obligation to the correspondent duties toward them. There are in holy Scripture divers names and phrases appropriate to them, each of them denoting some eminent part of their office, or some appertenance thereto;

but this seemeth of all most comprehensive; so that unto **SERM.**
it all the rest are well reducible: the term is ἡγούμενοι, **LVI.**
that is, *leaders*, or *guides*, or *captains*; which properly
may denote the subsequent particulars in way of duty, or
privilege, appertaining to them.

1. It may denote eminence of dignity, or superiority
to others: that they are, as it is said of Judas and Silas
in the Acts, ἀνδρες ἡγούμενοι ἐν ἀδελφοῖς, *principal men among* Acts xv. 22.
the brethren: for to lead implieth precedence, which is a
note of superiority and preeminence. Hence are they
styled προσητάρις, *presidents* or *prelates*; οἱ πῶτοι, *the first*, 1 Tim. v.
or *prime* men; οἱ μάλισ, *the greater*, majors, or *grandees* 17.
among us: *He*, saith our Lord, *that will be the first* 1 Theff. v. 13.
among you, let him be your servant; and, *He that is greater* 12.
among you, let him be as the younger; and *he that is chief*, Matt. xx.
as he that doth serve; where ὁ μάλισ and ὁ ἡγούμενος (the 27.
greater and the *leader*) are terms equivalent, or interpre- Luke xxii.
tative the one of the other; and our Lord in those places, 26.
as he prescribeth humility of mind and demeanour, so he Phil. ii. 29.
implieth difference of rank among his disciples: whence 1 Theff. v.
to render especial respect and honour to them, as to our 13.
betters, is a duty often enjoined. 1 Tim. v. 17.

2. It doth imply power and authority: their supe-
riority is not barely grounded on personal worth or for-
tune; it serveth not merely for order and pomp; but it
standeth upon the nature of their office, and tendeth to
use: they are by God's appointment enabled to exercise
acts of power; to command, to judge, to check, control,
and chastise in a spiritual way, in order to spiritual ends,
(the regulation of God's worship and service, the preser-
vation of order and peace, the promoting of edification in
divine knowledge and holiness of life;) so are they ἡγούμενοι,
as that word in common use (as the word ἡγούμενος, of kin
to it) doth signify, *captains* and *princes*, importing autho-
rity to command and rule; (whence the Hebrew word
נָשִׂיא, a *prince*, is usually rendered by it; and ὁ ἡγούμενος, Matt. ii. 6.
is the title attributed to our Lord, to express his kingly
function, being the same with ἀρχηγός, the *prince*, or *cap-* Acts v. 31.
tain;) hence are they otherwise styled κυβερνήταις (*gover-* 1 Cor. xii.
28.

SERM. *nors*), ἐπίσκοποι (*overseers*, or *superintendents*, as St. Hierome
LVI. rendereth it), *pastors*, (a word often signifying *rule*, and at-

Acts xx. 28. tributed to civil governors,) πρεσβύτεροι (*elders*, or *senators*;
Matt. ii. 6. *tors*; the word denoteth not merely age, but office and
Pf. lxxviii. authority), οἱ ἐπιμελοῦντες, *such as take care for*, the *cu-*
71. *rators*, or *supervisors* of the Church: hence also they are
1 Pet. v. 2. signally and specially in relation unto God styled δοῦλοι
2 Sam. v. 2. (*the servants*), διάκονοι (*the ministers*), ὑπηρέται (*the offi-*
vii. 7. *cers*), λειτουργοὶ (*the public agents*), οἰκονόμοι (*the stewards*),
1 Tim. iii. 5. συνεργοὶ (*the coadjutors*, or *assistants*), πρέσβεις (*the le-*
2 Tim. ii. 24. *gates*), ἄγγελοι (*the angels*, or *messengers*), of God; which
Rom. xv. 16. titles imply, that God by them, as his substitutes and in-
1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. iii. 9. vi. 16. struments, doth administer the affairs of his spiritual king-
2 Cor. vi. 4. dom: that as by secular magistrates (his vicegerents and
Tit. i. 2. officers) he manageth his universal temporal kingdom, or
Gal. iv. 14. governeth all men in order to their worldly peace and
Apoc. i. 29. prosperity; so by these spiritual magistrates he ruleth his
 Church, toward its spiritual welfare and felicity.

3. The word also doth imply direction, or instruction; that is, guidance of people in the way of truth and duty, reclaiming them from error and sin: this, as it is a means hugely conducing to the design of their office, so it is a principal member thereof: whence διδάσκαλοι, *doctors*, or masters in doctrine, is a common name of them; and to be διδακτικοί, *able and apt to teach*, (ικανοὶ διδάξαι, and πρόθυμοι,) is a chief qualification of their persons; and to attend on teaching, to be instant in preaching, to labour in the word and doctrine, are their most commendable performances: hence also they are called *shepherds*, because they feed the souls of God's people with the food of wholesome instruction; *watchmen*, because they observe men's ways, and warn them when they decline from right, or run into danger; the *messengers* of God, because they declare God's mind and will unto them for the regulation of their practice.

4. The word farther may denote exemplary practice; for to lead implieth so to go before, that he who is conducted may follow; as a captain marcheth before his troop; as a shepherd walketh before his flock, as a guide

goeth before the traveller, whom he directeth; hence they are said to be, and enjoined to behave themselves as *patterns of the flock*; and the people are charged to imitate and follow them.

Such in general doth the word here used imply the persons to be, unto whom obedience is prescribed: but there is farther some distinction to be made among them; there are degrees and subordinations in these guidances; some are in regard to different persons both empowered to guide, and obliged to follow, or obey.

The Church is *acies ordinata*, a well marshalled army; wherein, under the *Captain-general of our faith and salvation*, (*the Head of the body*, the sovereign Prince and Priest, the Arch-pastor, the chief *Apostle of our profession*, and *Bishop of our souls*,) there are divers captains serving in fit degrees of subordination; bishops commanding larger regiments, presbyters ordering less numerous companies; all which, by the bands of common faith, of mutual charity, of holy communion and peace, being combined together, do in their respective stations govern and guide, are governed and guided: the bishops, each in his precincts, guiding more immediately the priests subject to them; the priests, each guiding the people committed to his charge: all bishops and priests being guided by synods established, or congregated, upon emergent occasion; many of them ordinarily by those principal bishops, who are regularly settled in a presidency over them; according to the distinctions constituted by God and his Apostles, or introduced by human prudence, as the preservation of order and peace (in various times and circumstances of things) hath seemed to require: to which subordination the two great Apostles may seem to have regard, when they bid us *ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἀλλήλοις*, *to be subject to one another*^a; their injunction at least may, according to their general intent, (which aimeth at the preservation of order and peace,) be well extended so far.

SERM.
LVI.

1 Pet. v. 8.
1 Tim. iv.

12.

Phil. iii. 17.

Tit. ii. 7.

2 Thess. iii.

9, 7.

Heb. iii. 7.

1 Thess. i.

6.

1 Cor. xi. 1.

iv. 16.

1 Pet. v. 4.

Heb. iii. 1.

1 Pet. v. 5.

Eph. v. 21.

Phil. ii. 3.

^a Ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἕκαστος τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ καθὼς ἔστιν ἐν τῷ χαρίσματι αὐτοῦ.
Clem. ad Corinth. p. 49.

SERM. Of this distinction there was never in ancient times
LVI. made any question, nor did it seem disputable in the
 Church, except to one malecontent, (Aerius,) who did
 indeed get a name in story, but never made much noise,
 or obtained any vogue in the world; very few followers
 he found in his heterodoxy; no great body even of he-
 retics could find cause to dissent from the Church in this
 point; but all Arians, Macedonians, Novatians, Dona-
 tists, &c. maintained the distinction of ecclesiastical orders
 among themselves, and acknowledged the duty of the in-
 ferior clergy to their bishops: and no wonder, seeing it
 standeth upon so very firm and clear grounds; upon the
 reason of the case, upon the testimony of holy Scripture,
 upon general tradition and unquestionable monuments of
 antiquity, upon the common judgment and practice of the
 greatest saints, persons most renowned for wisdom and
 piety in the Church.

Reason plainly doth require such subordinations; for
 that without them it is scarce possible to preserve any du-
 rable concord or charity in Christian societies, to establish
 any decent harmony in the worship and service of God,
 to check odious scandals, to prevent or repress baneful
 factions, to guard our religion from being overspread with
 pernicious heresies, to keep the Church from being shat-
 tered into numberless sects, and thence from being crum-
 bled into nothing; in fine, for any good time to uphold
 the profession and practice of Christianity itself: for how,
 if there be not settled corporations of Christian people,
 having bulk and strength sufficient by joint endeavour to
 maintain the truth, honour, and interest of their religion;
 if the Church should only consist of independent and in-
 coherent particles, (like dust or sand,) easily scattered by
 any wind of opposition from without, or by any commo-
 tion within; if Christendom should be merely a Babel of
 confused opinions and practices; how, I say, then could
 Christianity subsist? how could the simple, among so dis-
 cordant apprehensions, be able to discern the truth of it?
 how would the wise be tempted to dislike it, being so
 mangled and disfigured? what an object of contempt and

foorn would it be to the profaner world, in such a case! **SERM.**
It needeth therefore considerable societies to uphold it; **LVI.**
but no society (especially of any large extent) can abide
in order and peace, under the management of equal and
coordinate powers; without a single undivided authority,
enabled to moderate affairs, and reduce them to a point,
to arbitrate emergent cases of difference, to put good
orders in execution, to curb the adversaries of order and
peace: these things cannot be well performed, where
there is a parity of many concurrents, apt to dissent, and
able to check each other^b; no democracy can be sup-
ported without borrowing somewhat from monarchy; no
body can live without a head; an army cannot be with-
out a general, a senate without a president, a corporation
without a supreme magistrate^c; this all experience at-
testeth; this even the chief impugnors of episcopal pre-
sidency do by their practice confess; who for prevention
of disorder have been fain of their own heads to devise ec-
clesiastical subordinations of classes, provinces, and na-
tions; and to appoint moderators (or temporary bishops)
in their assemblies; so that reason hath forced the dissent-
ers from the Church to imitate it.

If there be not inspectors over the doctrine and manners
of the common clergy, there will be many who will say
and do any thing; they will in teaching please their own
humour, or soothe the people, or serve their own inter-
ests; they will indulge themselves in a licentious manner
of life; they will clash in their doctrines, and scatter the
people, and draw them into factions.

It is also very necessary for preserving the unity and
communion of the parts of the Catholic Church; seeing

^b Ecclesiæ salus in summi sacerdotis dignitate consistit, cui si non exors
quædam, et ab omnibus eminens detur potestas tot in ecclesia efficientur
schismata, quot sacerdotes. *Hier. in Lucif.*

*Nec presbyterorum cœtus rite constitutus dici potest, in quo nullus sit
tyrannus.* *Bez. de Grad. Min. cap. 22.*

^c Essentiale fuit, quod ex Dei ordinatione perpetua necesse fuit, est, et erit,
ut presbyterio quispiam et loco et dignitate primus actioni gubernandæ præsit
cum eo, quod ipsi divinitus attributum est jure. *Bez. de Min. Evang. Grad.*
cap. xxiii. p. 153.

SERM. single persons are much fitter to maintain correspondence,
 LVI. than headless bodies.

The very credit of religion doth require, that there should be persons raised above the common level, and endued with eminent authority, to whose care the promoting it should be committed; for such as the persons are, who manage any profession, such will be the respect yielded thereto: if the ministers of religion be men of honour and authority, religion itself will be venerable; if *those* be mean, *that* will become contemptible.

The holy Scripture also doth plainly enough countenance this distinction; for therein we have represented one angel presiding over principal churches, which contained several presbyters; therein we find episcopal ordination and jurisdiction exercised; we have one bishop constituting presbyters in divers cities of his diocese; ordering all things therein concerning ecclesiastical discipline; judging presbyters, rebuking, *μετὰ πατρὸς ἐκταγῆς*, with all authority, (or imperiousness, as it were; Tit. ii. 15.) and reconciling offenders, excluding heretics and scandalous persons.

Apoc. ii. 2,
&c.

Tit. i. 5.
 1 Tim. v.
 1, 17, 19,
 20, 22, &c.

In the Jewish Church there were an high-priest, chief-priest, a sanhedrim, or senate, or synod.

The government of congregations among God's ancient people (which it is probable was the pattern that the Apostles, no affecters of needless innovation, did follow in establishing ecclesiastical discipline among Christians) doth hereto agree; for in their synagogues, answering to our Christian churches, they had, as their elders and doctors, *ראש* so over them an *ἀρχιεπιστάγους*, the head of the eldership, *הקהל* and president of the synagogue.

The primitive general use of Christians most effectually doth back the Scripture, and interpret it in favour of this distinction; scarce less than demonstrating it constituted by the Apostles; for how otherwise is it imaginable, that all the churches founded by the Apostles, in several most distant and disjointed places, (at Jerusalem, at Antioch, at Alexandria, at Ephesus, at Corinth, at Rome,) should presently conspire in acknowledgment and use of it? how

could it without apparent confederacy be formed, how SERM.
could it creep in without notable clatter, how could it be LVI.
admitted without considerable opposition, if it were not in
the foundation of those churches laid by the Apostles? How is it likely, that in those times of grievous persecution, falling chiefly upon the bishops, (when to be eminent among Christians yielded slender reward, and exposed to extreme hazard; when to seek preeminence was in effect to court danger and trouble, torture and ruin,) an ambition of irregularly advancing themselves above their brethren should so generally prevail among the ablest and best Christians? How could those famous martyrs for the Christian truth be some of them so unconscionable as to affect, others so irresolute as to yield to such injurious encroachments? and how could all the holy Fathers (persons of so renowned, so approved wisdom and integrity) be so blind as not to discern such a corruption, or so bad as to abet it? How indeed could all God's Church be so weak as to consent in judgment, so base as to comply in practice with it? In fine, how can we conceive that all the best monuments of antiquity down from the beginning (the acts, the epistles, the histories, the commentaries, the writings of all sorts coming from the blessed martyrs, and most holy confessors of our faith) should conspire to abuse us; the which do speak nothing but bishops; long catalogues and rows of bishops succeeding in this and that city; bishops contesting for the faith against Pagan idolaters, and heretical corrupters of Christian doctrine; bishops here teaching and planting our religion by their labours, there suffering and watering it with their blood?

I could not but touch this point: but I cannot insist thereon; the full discussion of it, and vindication of the truth from the cavils advanced against the truth by modern dissenters from the Church, having employed voluminous treatises: I shall only farther add, that if any man be so dully or so affectedly ignorant as not to see the reason of the case, and the dangerous consequences of rejecting this ancient form of discipline; if any be so overwhelmingly presumptuous, as to question the faith of all

SERM.
LVI.1 Cor. xi.
16.

history; or to disavow those monuments and that tradition, upon the testimony whereof even the truth and certainty of our religion, and all its sacred oracles do rely; if any be so perversely contentious, as to oppose the custom and current practice of the churches through all ages down to the last age; so self-conceitedly arrogant, as to condemn or slight the judgment and practice of all the Fathers, (together also with the opinion of the later most grave divines, who have judged episcopal presidency needful, or expedient, where practicable;) so peevishly refractory as to thwart the settled order of that Church, in which he was baptized, together with the law of the country, in which he was born; upon such a person we may look as one utterly invincible and intractable: so weak a judgment, and so strong a will, who can hope by reason to convert? I shall say no more to that point.

The ἡγούμενοι then (the guides and governors) in our text are primarily the bishops, as the superior and chief guides, each in his place according to order peaceably established; then secondarily the presbyters, in their station as guides inferior, together with the deacons as their assistants: such the Church always hath had, and such, by God's blessing, our Church now hath, toward whom the duty of obedience is to be performed.

To the consideration of that I should now proceed; but first it seemeth expedient to remove a main obstruction to that performance; which is this: a misprision, or doubt concerning the persons of our guides and governors; for in vain it would be to teach or persuade us to obey them, if we do not know who they are, or will not acknowledge them: for as in religion it is *primus Deorum cultus Deos credere, the first worship of God to believe God*, as Seneca saith; so it is the first part of our obedience to our governors to avow them; it is at least absolutely prerequisite thereto. It was of old a precept of St. Paul to the Thessalonians; *We beseech you, brethren, to know these who labour among you, and preside over you*: and another to the Corinthians; *Submit yourselves, saith he, to such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth*: then he

Sen. Ep.
95.1 Theff. v.
12.1 Cor. xvi.
16, 18.

subjoineth, ἐπιγινώσκετε τοὺς τοιοῦτους, *acknowledge such.* SERM. LVI.
 There were, it seemeth, those in the apostolical times, who would not know or acknowledge their guides; there were even those, who would not *admit* the Apostles themselves, as St. John saith of Diotrephes, who *refused* ^{3 John 10.} *their words*, as St. Paul saith of Alexander, to whom the ^{2 Tim. iv.} Apostles were not Apostles, as St. Paul intimateth concerning some, in regard to himself; there were then *pseud-apostles*, who excluded the *true Apostles*, intruding ^{2 Cor. ix. 2.} themselves into that high office: no wonder then, it may ^{2 Cor. xi.} be, that now, in these dregs of time, there should be ^{13.} many, who disavow and desert their true guides, transferring the observance due to them upon bold pretenders; who are not indeed guides, but seducers; not governors, but usurpers, and sacrilegious invaders of this holy office: the duty we speak of cannot be secured without preventing or correcting this grand mistake; and this we hope to compass by representing a double character, or description, one of the *true guides*, another of the *counterfeits*; by comparing which we may easily distinguish them, and consequently be induced dutifully to avow and follow the one sort, wisely to disclaim and decline the other.

Those, I say, then, who constantly do profess and teach that sound and wholesome doctrine, which was delivered by our Lord and his Apostles in word and writing, was received by their disciples in the primitive churches, was transmitted and confirmed by general tradition, was sealed by the blood of the blessed martyrs, and propagated by the labours of the holy Fathers; the which also manifestly recommendeth and promoteth true reverence and piety toward God, justice and charity toward men, order and quiet in human societies, purity and sobriety in each man's private conversation.

Those who celebrate the true worship of God, and administer the holy mysteries of our religion in a serious, grave, decent manner, purely and without any notorious corruption, either by hurtful error, or superstitious foppery, or irreverent rudeness, to the advancement of God's

SERM. honour, and edification of the participants in virtue and
LVI. piety.

Those who derive their authority by a continued succession from the Apostles; who are called unto, and constituted in their office in a regular and peaceable way, agreeable to the institution of God, and the constant practice of his Church; according to rules approved in the best and purest ages: who are prepared to the exercise of their function by the best education that ordinarily can be provided, under sober discipline, in the schools of the prophets, who thence by competent endowments of mind, and useful furniture of good learning, acquired by painful study, become qualified to guide and instruct the people: who, after previous examination of their abilities, and probable testimonies concerning their manners, (with regard to the qualifications of incorrupt doctrine, and sober conversation prescribed by the Apostles,) are adjudged fit for the office; who also in a pious, grave, solemn manner, with invocation of God's blessing, by
 1 Tim. iii. *laying on the hands of the presbytery*, are admitted there-
 7, 10. unto.

Those whose practice in guiding and governing the people of God is not managed by arbitrary, uncertain, fickle, private fancies or humours, but regulated by standing laws; framed (according to general directions extant in holy Scripture) by pious and wise persons, with mature advice, in accommodation to the seasons and circumstances of things for common edification, order, and peace.

Those who, by virtue of their good principles, in their disposition and demeanour appear sober, orderly, peaceable, yielding meek submission to government, tendering the Church's peace, upholding the communion of the saints, abstaining from all schismatical, turbulent, and factious practices.

Those also, who are acknowledged by the laws of our country, an obligation to obey whom is part of that
 1 Pet. ii. 13. *human constitution*, unto which we are in all things (not evidently repugnant to God's law) indispensably bound to submit; whom our sovereign, God's vicerent and

the nursing father of his Church among us, (unto whom SERM: in all things high respect, in all lawful things entire LVI. obedience is due,) doth command and encourage us to obey.

Those, I say, to whom this character plainly doth agree, we may reasonably be assured, that they are our true guides and governors, whom we are obliged to follow and obey: for what better assurance can we in reason desire? what more proper marks can be assigned to discern them by? what methods of constituting such needful officers can be settled more answerable to their design and use? how can it be evil or unsafe to follow guides authorized by such warrants, conformed to such patterns, endowed with such dispositions, acting by such principles and rules? can we mistake or miscarry by complying with the great body of God's Church through all ages, and particularly with those great lights of the primitive Church, who by the excellency of their knowledge, and the integrity of their virtue, have so illustrated our holy religion?

There are, on the other hand, sufficiently plain characters, by which we may descry seducers, and false pretenders to guide us.

Those who do *ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν*, *teach otherwise*, or disost 1 Tim. vi. from the good ancient wholesome doctrine, revealed in 3. i. 3, 4. Gal. i. 9. the holy Scripture, attested by universal tradition, pro- 1 Tim. i. 4. fessed, taught, maintained to death by the primitive saints vi. 4, 20. 2 Tim. ii. and martyrs; who affect novelties, uncouth notions, big 14, 16, 23. words, and dark phrases; who dote on curious empty spe- Tit. iii. 9. culations, and idle questions, which engender strife, and 2 Pet. ii. 18. yield no good fruit.

Those who ground their opinions and warrant their Ipforum proceedings not by clear testimonies of divine revelation, ordination- nes temera- by the dictates of sound reason, by the current authority ris, incon- stantes, of wise and good men, but by the suggestions of their own leves. Ter- tull. fancy, by the impulses of their passion and zeal, by pre- tendences to special inspiration, by imaginary necessities, and such like fallacious rules.

Those who, by counterfeit shews of mighty zeal and

SERM. extraordinary affection, by affected forms of speech, by
 LVI. pleasing notions, by prophesying *smooth things*, daubing
 and glozing, by various artifices of flattery and fraud,
 attract and abuse weak and heedless people.

Those who, without any apparent commission from God, or allowable call from men, or extraordinary necessity of the case, in no legal or regular way, according to no custom received in God's Church, do intrude themselves into the office, or are only assumed thereto by ignorant, unstable, giddy, factious people^d, such as those
 2Tim. iv. 3. of whom St. Paul saith, *that according to their own lusts they heap up teachers to themselves, having itching ears.*

Those who are not in reasonable ways fitly prepared, not duly approved, not competently authorized, not orderly admitted to the office, according to the prescriptions of God's word, and the practice of his Church; not entering into the fold by the door, but breaking through, or clambering over the fences of sober discipline.

Those who in their mind, their principles, their designs, and all their practice, appear void of that charity, that meekness, that calmness, that gravity, that sincerity, that stability, which qualify worthy and true guides: who in the disposition of their mind are froward, fierce, and stubborn; in their principles loose and slippery; in their designs and behaviour turbulent, disorderly, violent, deceitful: who regard not order or peace, but wantonly raise scandals, create dissensions, abet and foment disturbances in the Church: who under religious appearances indulge their passions, and serve their interests, using a guise of devotion, and talk about holy things as instruments to vent wrath, envy, and spleen; to drive forward designs of ambition and avarice; who will not submit to any certain

^d Hi sunt qui se ultro apud temerarios convenas sine Divina dispositione præficiunt, qui se præpositos sine ulla ordinationis lege constituunt, qui nemine episcopatum dante episcopi sibi nomen assument. *Cypr. de Un. Eccl.* p. 256.

judgment or rule, will like nothing but what their fancy **SERM.**
 suggests, will acknowledge no law but their own will; **LVI.**
 who for no just cause, and upon any slender pretence,
 withdraw themselves, and seduce others from the Church,
 in which they were brought up, deserting its communion,
 impugning its laws, defaming its governors, endeavouring
 to subvert its establishment: who manage their discipline
 (such as it is of their own framing) unadvisedly and un-
 steadily, in no stable method, according to no settled rule,
 but as present conceit, or humour, or advantage prompt-
 eth; so that not being fixed in any certain judgment or
 practice, they soon clash with themselves, and divide from
 one another, incessantly roving from one sect to another;
being carried about with divers and strange doctrines; like Heb. xiii.
children, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. Eph. iv. 14.

Those, the fruits of whose doctrine and managery
 amount at best only to empty form of godliness, void of
 real virtue; while in truth they fill the minds of men
 with ill passions, ill fumes, ill will; they produce im-
 pious, unjust, and uncharitable dealing of all kinds, par-
 ticularly discontentful murmurings, disobedience to ma-
 gistrates, schisms and factions in the Church, combus-
 tions and seditions in the State.

In fine, those who in their temper and their deport-
 ment resemble those ancient seducers, branded in the
 Scripture, those *evil men, who did seduce, and were se-* 2 Tim. iii.
duced: 13.

Whose dispositions are represented in these epithets:
 they were ἀνυπότακτοι, *unruly*, or persons indisposed and Tit. i. 10.
 unwilling to submit to government; *τολμηταί, αὐθάδεις,*
presumptuous, and self-willed, or self-pleasing darers; γογ- 2 Pet. ii. 10.
γορά, μεμψιμαῖοι, murmurers, complainers, or conjunctly
 discontented mutiners; *αὐτοκατάκριτοι, self-condemned,* Tit. iii. 10,
 namely, by contradictory shuffling and shifting, or by ex- 11.
 communicating themselves from the Church; γόητες, *be-* 2 Tim. iii.
witchers; inveigling and deluding credulous people by 13, 4.
 dissimulation and specious appearances; *having a form* Matt. vii.
of godliness, but denying the power thereof; being wolves 15.
in sheep's clothing, grievous wolves, not sparing the flock; Acts xx. 29.

SERM. *deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the servants*
LVI. *of Christ, and ministers of righteousness; lovers of them-*

- 2 Cor. xi.** *13, 15.* *selfes, covetous, boasters, proud, revilers, truce-breakers,*
1 Tim. vi. 4. *false accusers, traitors, heady, high minded, vain talkers,*
2 Pet. iii. 16. *deceivers, ignorant, unlearned, unstable:*
Rom. xvi. *Whose practices were; to cause divisions and offences*
17, 18. *contrary to received doctrine; by good words and fair*
1 Tim. i. 6, 7.) *speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple;—to swerve*
from charity—having turned aside to vain jangling, desir-
ing to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what
they say, nor whereof they affirm: to beguile unstable
Eph. iv. 14. *souls; to lie in wait to deceive; to speak perverse things*
Acts xx. 19. *that they may draw disciples after them; to creep into*
2 Tim. iii. 5. *houses, captivating silly women; to dote about questions and*
1 Tim. vi. 4. *strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil*
2 Pet. ii. 18. *surmisings, perverse disputings; to speak swelling words of*
Jude 16. *vanity; to admire persons because of advantage, (or out of*
Tit. i. 11. *private design, for self-interest;) to subvert whole houses,*
teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake;
1 Tim. iv. 2. *to speak lies in hypocrisy; to preach Christ out of envy and*
Phil. i. 15, 16. *strife, not out of good-will, or pure intention, (ὁχ ἀγνῶς,)*
2 Pet. ii. 19. *not purely; to promise liberty to their followers; to walk*
2 Theff. iii. 6, 11. *disorderly; (that is, in repugnance to order settled in the*
2 Pet. ii. 10. *Church;) to despise dominion, and without fear to re-*
Jude 8. *proach dignities; to speak evil (rashly) of those things*
Jude 10. *which they know not, (which are beside their skill and*
Jude 9. *cognizance;) to separate themselves from the Church.*

Such persons as these, arrogating to themselves the
Tit. iii. 10. office of guides, and pretending to lead us, we must not
2 Theff. iii. 6. follow or regard; but are in reason and conscience obliged
Rom. xvi. 17. to reject and shun them, as the ministers of Satan, the
1 Tim. vi. 5. pests of Christendom, the enemies and murderers of souls.

It can indeed nowise be safe to follow any such leaders,
 (whatever pretences to special illumination they hold
 forth, whatever specious guises of sanctity they bear,) who in their doctrine or practice deflect from the great beaten roads of holy Scripture, primitive tradition, and catholic practice, roving in by-paths suggested to them by their private fancies and humours, their passions and

lusts, their interests and advantages: there have in all ages such counterfeit guides started up, having debauched some few heedless persons, having erected some *παρὰ νομῶν*, or petty combinations against the regularly settled corporations; but never with any durable success or countenance of divine Providence; but like prodigious meteors, having caused a little gazing, and some disturbance, their sects have soon been dissipated, and have quite vanished away; the authors and abettors of them being either buried in oblivion, or recorded with ignominy: like that Theudas in the speech of Gamaliel, who *rose up, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves; who was slain, and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.* SERM. LVI.

But let thus much suffice to have been spoken concerning the persons to whom obedience must be performed.

SERMON LVII.

OF OBEDIENCE TO OUR SPIRITUAL GUIDES AND GOVERNORS.

HEB. xiii. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

SERM. LVII. I PROCEED to the duty itself, the obedience prescribed, which may (according to the extent in signification of the word *πειθεσθαι*) be conceived to relate either to the government, or to the doctrine, or to the conversation of the persons specified; implying, that we should obey their laws, that we should embrace their doctrine, that we should conform to their practice, according to proper limitations of such performance, respectively.

We begin with the first, as seeming chiefly intended by the words :

Obedience to ecclesiastical government : what this doth import we may understand by considering the terms whereby it is expressed, and those whereby its correlate (spiritual government) is signified; by examples and practice relating to it, by the nature and reason of the matter itself.

Beside the word *πειθεσθαι*, (which is commonly used to signify all sorts of obedience, chiefly that which is due to governors,) here is added a word serving to explain that, the word *ὑπεικων*, which signifieth to yield, give way, or comply; relating (as it seemeth by its being put indefinitely) to all their proceedings in matters concerning their charge. In other places, parallel to our text, it is ex-

pressed by *υποτάσσεσθαι*, the same term by which constantly the subjection due to secular powers, in all the precepts enjoining it, is expressed: *Ὁμοίως νεώτεροι ὑποτάγητε πρεσβυτέροις*, *In like manner, (or correspondently,) faith St. Peter, ye younger submit yourselves to the elder; (that is, as the context shews, ye inferiors in the Church obey your superiors; ὁ νεώτερος both there and elsewhere doth signify the state of inferiority, as ὁ πρεσβύτερος importeth dignity and authority.) And, ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς τοιούτοις, submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth, faith St. Paul; and, ἀλλήλοις ὑποτασσόμενοι, submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of God, that is, yielding conscientiously that submission, which established order requireth from one to another: whence we may collect, that the duty consisteth in yielding submission and compliance to all laws, rules, and orders enacted by spiritual governors for the due celebration of God's worship, the promoting edification, the conserving decency, the maintenance of peace; as also to the judgments and censures in order to the same purposes administered by them.*

SERM.
LVII.
(Tit. iii. 1.
Rom. xiii.
1.
1 Pet. ii.
13.)
1 Pet. v. 5.
Luke xxii.
26.
1 Cor. xvi.
16.
Eph. v. 21.
1 Pet. v. 3.

This obedience to be due to them may likewise be inferred from the various names and titles attributed to them; such as those of Prelates, Superintendents, Pastors, Supervisors, Governors, and Leaders; which terms (more largely touched before) do imply command and authority of all sorts, legislative, judicial, and executive.

Such obedience also primitive practice doth assert to them: for what authority the holy Apostles did assume and exercise, the same we may reasonably suppose derived to them; the same in kind, although not in peculiarity of manner, (by immediate commission from Christ, with supply of extraordinary gifts and graces,) and in unlimitedness of extent: for they do succeed to the Apostles in charge and care over the Church, each in his precinct, the apostolical office being distributed among them all. The same titles which the Apostles assumed to themselves they ascribe to their Sympresbyters, requiring the same duties from them, and prescribing obedience to

Cujus in solidum singuli participes sumus. Vid. Cypr. de Unit. Eccl.

SERM. them in the same terms; they claimed no more power
LVII. than was needful to further edification, and this is requi-

2 Cor. x. 8. site that present governors also should have; their practice
xiii. 10. in government may also well be presumed exemplary to
To ordain elders. all future governors. As then we see them διατάσσαν, to
To confirm presbyters. order things, and frame ecclesiastical constitutions; διορθεύον,
To exercise jurisdiction. to rectify things, or reform defects, to impose observances
1 Cor. xi. 34. necessary, or expedient to the time; to judge causes and
persons, being ready to avenge, or punish, every disobedience;
Tit. i. 5. to use severity upon occasions; with the spiritual rod to
Aets xv. 28. chastise scandalous offenders, disorderly walkers, persons
1 Cor. v. 12. contumacious and unconformable to their injunctions; to
2 Cor. x. 6. reject heretics, and banish notorious sinners from commu-
xiii. 10. nion, warning the faithful to forbear conversation with
1 Cor. iv. 21. xii. 21. them: as they did challenge to themselves an authority
xiii. 2. from Christ to exercise these and the like acts of spiritual
2 Thess. iii. 6, 14. dominion and jurisdiction, exacting punctual obedience to
Tit. iiii. 10. them; as we also see the like acts exercised by bishops,
1 Tim. vi. 3. whom they did constitute to feed and rule the Church;
Rom. xvi. 17. so we may reasonably conceive all governors of the Church
2 Cor. x. 8. Episcopi (the heirs of their office) invested with like authority in
xiii. 10. order to the same purposes, and that correspondent obe-
Episcopi successores Apostolorum. Cyprian. dience is due to them; so that what blame, what punish-
Ep. 27. 69. ment was due to those, who disobeyed the Apostles, doth
&c. in proportion belong to the transgressors of their duty
Ep. 41. 75. toward the present governors of the Church; especially
(Firmil.) considering that our Lord promised his perpetual presence
Matt. xxviii. 20. and assistance to the Apostles.

We may farther observe, that accordingly, in continual succession from the first ages, the good primitive bishops (the great patrons and propagators of our religion) did generally assume such power, and the people readily did yield obedience; wherein that one did wrongfully usurp, the other did weakly comply, were neither probable nor just to suppose: whence general tradition doth also confirm our obligation to this duty.

That this kind of obedience is required doth also farther appear from considering the reason of things, the condition of the Church, the design of Christian religion.

1. Every Christian church is a society; no society can SERM.
abide in any comely order, any steady quiet, any desirable LVII.
prosperity, without government; no government can stand
without correspondent obligation to submit thereto.

2. Again; The state of religion under the Gospel is the kingdom of heaven; Christ our Lord is king of the Church; it he visibly governeth and ordereth by the spiritual governors, as his substitutes and lieutenants; (whence they peculiarly are styled his ministers, his officers, his stewards, his legates, his co-workers.) When he ascending up to God's right hand was invested with entire possession of that royal state, he settled them to administer affairs concerning that government in his place and name: *Ascending up on high he gave gifts unto men.—He gave* Eph. iv. 8, *some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors* 11, 12. *and teachers*: he gave them, that is, he appointed them in their office, subordinate to himself, *for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.* As to him, therefore, ruling by them, by them enacting laws, dispensing justice, maintaining order and peace, obedience is due.

3. Again; For the honour of God, the commendation (1 Cor. xiv. 23. Tit. ii. 10.) of religion, and benefit of the people, it is needful, that in all religious performances things should, according to St. Paul's rule, be performed *decently, and according to* 1 Cor. xiv. 40. *order*, without unhandsome confusion, and troublesome distraction: this cannot be accomplished without a determination of persons, of modes, of circumstances appertaining to those performances; (for how can any thing be performed decently, if every person hath not his rank and station, his office and work allotted to him; if to every thing to be done, its time, its place, its manner of performance be not assigned, so that each one may know what, when, where, and how he must do?) Such determination must be committed to the discretion and care of some persons, empowered to frame standing laws or rules concerning it, and to see them duly executed; (for all persons without delay, strife, confusion, and disturbance, cannot meddle in it:) with these persons all the rest of the

SERM. body must be obliged to comply; otherwise all such de-
LVII. terminations will be vain and ineffectual. Such order
 reason doth recommend in every proceeding; such order
 especially becometh the grandeur and importance of sa-
 cred things; such order God hath declared himself to ap-
 prove, and love, especially in his own house, among his
 1 Cor. xiv. people, in matters relating to his service; for, *He is not,*
 33. as St. Paul saith, arguing to this purpose, *the God of con-*
fusion, but of peace, in all churches of the saints.

4. Again; It is requisite that all Christian brethren
 should conspire in serving God with mutual charity, hearty
 concord, harmonious consent; that, as the Apostles so
 often prescribed, they *should endeavour to keep unity of*
 Συμφωνία. *Spirit in the bond of peace; that they should be like-*
 Phil. ii. 2. *Ομόφρονες.*
 1 Pet. iii. 8. *minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one*
 Eph. iv. 3. *mind, standing fast in one spirit, with one mind; that they*
 Phil. ii. 2. *should walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing;*
 i. 27. iii. 16. *that with one mind and one mouth they should glorify God,*
 Rom. xv. *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; that they should all*
 2 Cor. xiii. *speak the same thing; and that there be no divisions among*
 11. *them, but that they be perfectly joined together in the same*
 1 Cor. i. 10. *mind, and in the same judgment; (like those in the Acts,*

Acts iv. 32. *of whom it is said, The multitude of believers had one*
 1 Cor. xii. *heart and one soul;)* that there should be no schisms (divi-
 25. xi. 18. *sions, or factions) in the body; that all dissensions, all*
 i. 11. iii. 3. *murmurings, all emulations should be discarded from the*
 2 Cor. xii. *Church: the which precepts, secluding an obligation to*
 20. *obedience, would be impossible, and vain; for (without*
 Phil. ii. 14. *continual miracle, and transforming human nature, things*
 not to be expected from God, who apparently designeth
 to manage religion by ordinary ways of human prudence,
 his gracious assistance concurring) no durable concord in
 any society can ever effectually be maintained otherwise
 than by one public reason, will, and sentence, which may
 represent, connect, and comprise all; in defect of that
 every one will be of a several opinion about what is best,
 each will be earnest for the prevalence of his model and
 way; there will be so many lawgivers as persons, so
 many differences as matters incident; nothing will pass

smoothly and quietly, without bickering and jangling, SERM. and consequently without animosities and feuds: whence LIII.
no unanimity, no concord, scarce any charity or good-
will can subsist.

5. Farther; In consequence of these things common edification requireth such obedience: it is the duty of governors to order all things to this end, that is, to the maintenance, encouragement, and improvement of piety; for this purpose their authority was given them, as St. ² Cor. xiii. Paul saith, and therefore it must be deemed thereto con- ^{10. x. 8.}
ducible: it is indeed very necessary to edification, which, without discipline guiding the simple and ignorant, reclaiming the erroneous and presumptuous, cherishing the regular, and correcting the refractory, can nowise be promoted.

Excluding it, there can be no means of checking or redressing scandals, which to the reproach of religion, to the disgrace of the Church, to the corrupting the minds, ^{1 Tim. i. 19. vi. 5.}
and infecting the manners of men, will spring up, and ^{2 Tim. ii. 16, 17, 18.}
spread. Neither can there be any way to prevent the rise and growth of pernicious errors, or heresies; the which assuredly in a state of unrestrained liberty the wanton and wicked minds of men will breed, their licentious practice will foster and propagate, to the increase of all ^{2 Tim. ii. 16.}
impiety: their mouths must be stopped, otherwise they will ^{Tit. i. 11.}
subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not ^{2 Tim. ii. 17.}
for filthy lucre's sake; the word of naughty seducers will spread like a gangrene, if there be no corrosive or corrective remedy to stay its progress.

Where things are not managed in a stable, quiet, orderly way, no good practice can flourish, or thrive; dissension will choke all good affections, confusion will obstruct all good proceedings; from anarchy, emulation and strife will certainly grow, and from them all sorts of wickedness; for where, saith St. James, there is *emulation and strife, there is confusion and every evil thing.* Jam. iii. 16.

All those benefits, which arise from holy communion in offices of piety and charity, (from common prayers and praises to God, from participation in all sacred ordinances,

SERM. from mutual advice, admonition, encouragement, consolation, good example,) will together vanish with discipline; these depend upon the friendly union and correspondence of the members; and no such union can abide without the ligament of discipline, no such correspondence can be upheld without unanimous compliance to public order. The cement of discipline wanting, the Church
LVII. will not be like a *spiritual house*, compacted of *lively stones* into one goodly pile; but like a company of scattered pebbles, or a heap of rubbish.

1 Pet. ii. 5.

So considering the reason of things, this obedience will appear needful: to enforce the practice thereof we may adjoin several weighty considerations.

Consider obedience, what it is, whence it springs, what it produceth; each of those respects will engage us to it.

It is in itself a thing very good and acceptable to God, very just and equal, very wise, very comely and pleasant.

It cannot but be grateful unto God, who is the God of love, of order, of peace, and therefore cannot but like the means furthering them; he cannot but be pleased to see men do their duty, especially that which regardeth his own ministers; in the respect performed to whom he is himself indeed avowed, and honoured, and obeyed^a.

It is a just and equal thing, that every member of society should submit to the laws and orders of it; for every man is supposed upon those terms to enter into, and to abide in it; every man is deemed to owe such obedience, in answer to his enjoyment of privileges and partaking of advantages thereby; so therefore whoever pretendeth a title to those excellent immunities, benefits, and comforts, which communion with the Church affordeth, it is most equal, that he should contribute to its support and welfare, its honour, its peace; that consequently

^a Tempus est, — ut de submissione provocent in se Dei clementiam, et de honore debito in Dei sacerdotem eliciant in se divinam misericordiam. *Cypr. Ep. 30.*

he should yield obedience to the orders appointed for those ends. Peculiarly equal it is in regard to our spiritual governors, who are obliged to be very solicitous and laborious in furthering our best good; who stand deeply engaged, and are responsible for the welfare of our souls: they must be contented to *spend, and be spent*; to undergo any pains, any hardships, any dangers and crosses occurring in pursuance of those designs: and is it not then plainly equal (is it not indeed more than equal, doth not all ingenuity and gratitude require?) that we should encourage and comfort them in bearing those burdens, and in discharging those incumbencies, by a fair and cheerful compliance? it is the Apostle's enforcement of the duty in our text: *Obeys them, saith he, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as those who are to render an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, (or groaning.)*

Is it not indeed extreme iniquity and ingratitude, when they with anxious care and earnest toil are endeavouring our happiness, that we should vex and trouble them by our perverse and cross behaviour?

Nay, is it not palpable folly to do thus, seeing thereby we do indispose and hinder them from effectually discharging their duty to our advantage? ἀλλοστελλας γαρ υμιν τούτο, for this, addeth the Apostle, farther pressing the duty, *is unprofitable to you, or it tendeth to your disadvantage and damage*; not only as involving guilt, but as inferring loss; the loss of all those spiritual benefits, which ministers being encouraged; and thence performing their office with alacrity and sprightly diligence, would procure to you: it is therefore our wisdom to be obedient, because obedience is so advantageous and profitable to us.

The same is also a comely and amiable thing, yielding much grace, procuring great honour to the Church, highly adorning and crediting religion: it is a goodly sight to behold things proceeding orderly; to see every person quietly resting in his post, or moving evenly in his rank; to observe superiors calmly leading, inferiors gladly

SERM. following, and equals lovingly accompanying each other:
LVII. this is the Psalmist's, *Ecce quam bonum! Behold, how*

Pf. cxxxix. (admirably) *good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to*
1. *dwell together in unity!* such a state of things argueth

Tit. ii. 10.

the good temper and wisdom of persons so demeaning themselves, the excellency of the principles which do guide and act them, the goodness of the constitution which they observe; so it crediteth the Church, and graceth religion; a thing which, as St. Paul teacheth, *in all things* we should endeavour.

It is also a very pleasant and comfortable thing to live in obedience; by it we enjoy tranquillity of mind and satisfaction of conscience, we taste all the sweets of amity and peace, we are freed from the stings of inward remorse, we escape the grievances of discord and strife.

The causes also and principles from which obedience springeth do much commend it: it ariseth from the dispositions of soul which are most Christian and most humane; from charity, humility, meekness, sobriety of mind, and calmness of passion; the which always dispose men to submissive, complaisant, peaceable demeanour toward all men, especially toward those whose relation to them claimeth such demeanour: these a genuine, free, cordial, and constant obedience do signify to live in the soul; together with a general honesty of intention, and exemption from base designs.

In fine, innumerable and inestimable are the benefits and good fruits accruing from this practice; beside the support it manifestly yieldeth to the Church, the gratefulness of order, the conveniences and pleasures of peace, it hath also a notable influence upon the common manners of men, which hardly can ever prove very bad, where the governors of the Church do retain their due respect and authority; nothing more powerfully doth instigate to virtue, than the countenance of authority; nothing more effectually can restrain from exorbitancy of vice, than the bridle of discipline: this obvious experience demonstrateth, and we shall plainly see, if we reflect upon those times when piety and virtue have most flour-

rished: Whence was it, that in those good old times Christians did so abound in good works, that they burned with holy zeal, that they gladly would do, would suffer any thing for their religion? whence but from a mighty respect to their superiors, from a strict regard to their direction and discipline? Did the bishops then prescribe long fasts, or impose rigid penances? willingly did the people undergo them: Did the pastor conduct into danger, did he lead them into the very jaws of death and martyrdom? the flock with a resolute alacrity did follow: Did a prelate interdict any practice scandalous or prejudicial to the Church, under pain of incurring censure? every man trembled at the consequences of transgressing^b: no terror of worldly power, no severity of justice, no dread of corporal punishment had such efficacy to deter men from ill-doing, as the reproof and censure of a bishop; his frown could avail more than the menaces of an emperor, than the rage of a persecutor, than the rods and axes of an executioner: no rod indeed did smart like the spiritual rod, no sword did cut so deep as that of the Spirit; no loss was then so valuable as being deprived of spiritual advantages; no banishment was so grievous as being separated from holy communion; no sentence of death was so terrible as that which cut men off from the Church; no thunder could astonish or affright men like the crack of a spiritual anathema: this was that which kept virtue in request, and vice in detestation; hence it was that men were so good, that religion did so thrive, that so frequent and so illustrious examples of piety did appear; hence indeed we may well reckon that Christianity did (under so many disadvantages and oppositions) subsist, and grow up; obedience to governors was its guard; that kept the Church firmly united in a body sufficiently strong to maintain itself against all assaults of faction within, of opposition from abroad; that preserved

SERM.
LVII.

^b Neque hoc ita dixerim, ut negligatur ecclesiastica disciplina, et permittatur quisquam facere quod velit sine ulla correptione, et quadam medicinali vindicta, et terribili lenitate, et charitatis severitate. *Aug. adv. Petil. iii. 4.*

SERM. that concord, which disposed and enabled Christians to
LVII. defend their religion against all fraud and violence; that
 cherished the true virtue, and the beautiful order, which
 begot veneration to religion: to it therefore we owe the
 life and growth of Christianity; so that through many sharp
 persecutions it hath held up its head, through so many
 perilous diseases it hath kept its life until this day. There
 were not then of old any such cavils and clamours against
 every thing prescribed by governors; there were no such
 unconscionable scruples, no such hardhearted pretences to
 tender conscience devised to baffle the authority of supe-
 riors: had there been such, had men then commonly been
 so froward and factious as now, the Church had been soon
 shivered into pieces, our religion had been swallowed up
 in confusion and licentiousness.

If again we on the other hand fix our consideration upon
 disobedience, (the nature, the sources, the consequences
 thereof,) it will, I suppose, much conduce to the same
 effect, of persuading us to the practice of this duty.

It is in itself a heinous sin, being the transgression of a
 command in nature and consequence very important, upon
 which God layeth great stress, which is frequently incul-
 cated in Scripture, which is fenced by divers other pre-
 cepts, which is pressed by strong arguments, and backed by
 severe threatenings of punishment upon the transgressors.

It is in its nature a kind of apostasy from Christianity,
 and rebellion against our Lord; for as he that refuseth to
 obey the king's magistrates in administration of their office
 is interpreted to disclaim his authority, and to design rebel-
 lion against him; so they who obstinately disobey the
 ministers of our Lord's spiritual kingdom do thereby ap-
 pear to disavow him, to shake off his yoke, to impeach
 his reign over them; so doth he himself interpret and
 take it: *He, saith our Lord, that heareth you heareth me,*
and he that (ὁ ἀρνῶν, that baffleth) despiseth you despiseth
me; and, If any man neglect to hear the Church, (or shall
disobey it, ἐὰν παρακούσῃ,) let him be to thee as a heathen,
and a publican; that is, such a refractory person doth by
his contumacy put himself into the state of one removed

Luke x. 16.
 Matt. x. 40.
 Matt. xii.
 17.

from *the commonwealth of Israel*, he forfeiteth the special **SERM.** protection of God, he becometh as an alien or an outlaw **LVII.** from the kingdom of our Lord^d.

Under the Mosaical dispensation those *who would do* Deut. xvii. *presumptuously, and would not hearken unto the priest, that* ^{12.} *stood to minister before the Lord*, did incur capital punishment; those who factiously murmured against Aaron are said to make an insurrection against God, and answerably were punished in a miraculous way, (*the Lord made a new* Num. xvi. *thing, the earth opened, and swallowed them up; they went* ^{11, 30.} *down alive into the pit.*) It was in the prophetical times an expression signifying height of impiety, *My people is* Hof. iv. 4. *as those who strive with the priest.* Seeing then God hath no less regard to his peculiar servants now than he had then; seeing they no less represent him, and act by his authority now, than any did then; seeing their service is as precious to him, and as much tendeth to his honour now, as the Levitical service then did; seeing he no less loveth order and peace in the Church, than he did in the Synagogue; we may well suppose it a no less heinous sin, and odious to God, to despise the ministers of Christ's Gospel, than it was before to despise the ministers of Moses's Law^e.

It is a sin indeed pregnant with divers sins, and involving the breach of many great commands, which are frequently proposed and pressed in the New Testament, with design in great part to guard and secure it: that of *doing* ^{1 Cor. xvi. 14.} *all things in charity*; of *doing all things without murmurings and dissensions*; of *pursuing peace so far as lieth in us*; ^{Phil. ii. 14. Rom. xii. 18.} of maintaining unity, concord, unanimity in devotion; of ^{2 Tim. ii. 22.} avoiding schisms, and dissensions, and the like: which are ^{Heb. xii. 14.} all notoriously violated by this disobedience; it includeth ^{Mark ix. 10.} the most high breach of charity, the most formal infring-

^d Nec putent sibi vitæ aut salutis constare rationem, si episcopis et sacerdotibus obtemperare noluerint; cum in Deutron. Deus dicat, &c. *Cypr. Ep. 61.*

^e Quo exemplo ostenditur, et probatur obnoxios omnes et culpæ et pœnæ futuros, qui se schismaticis contra præpositos et sacerdotes irreligiosa temeritate miscuerint. *Cypr. Ep. 76.*

SERM. ing peace, the most scandalous kind of discord that can be,
LVII. to cross our superiors^f.

It is also a practice issuing from the worst dispositions of soul, such as are most opposite to the spirit of our religion, and indeed very repugnant to common reason and humanity; from a proud haughtiness or vain wantonness of mind; from the irregularity of unmortified and unbridled passion; from exorbitant selfishness, (selfishness of every bad kind, self-conceit, self-will, self-interest;) from turbulent animosity, froward crossness of humour, rancorous spite, perverse obstinacy; from envy, ambition, avarice, and the like ill sources, the worst fruits of the flesh and corrupt nature: to such dispositions the rejecting God's prophets of old, and the noncompliance with the Apostles are ascribed in Scripture; and from the same the like neglect of God's messengers now do proceed; as whoever will observe, may easily discern; do but mind the discourses of factious people, you shall perceive them all to breathe generally nothing but ill-nature.

The fruits also which it produceth are extremely bad; manifold great inconveniences and mischiefs, hugely prejudicing the interest of religion and the welfare of the Church.

Vid. Cypr.
 Ep. 55. Ne-
 que enim
 aliunde, &c.

It is immediately and formally a violation of order and peace; whence all the woful consequences of disorder and faction do adhere thereto.

It breedeth great disgrace to the Church and scandal to religion; for what can appear more ugly than to see among the professors of religion children opposing their fathers, scholars contesting with their masters, inferiors slighting and crossing their superiors? what can more expose the Church and religion to the contempt, to the derision of atheists and infidels, of profane and lewd persons, of wild heretics and schismatics, of all enemies unto truth and piety, than such foul irregularity?

^f An esse sibi cum Christo videtur, qui adversus sacerdotes Christi facit?
Ec. Cypr. de Unit. Eccl. p. 258.

^s Inde schismata, et hæreses abortivæ sunt, et oriuntur, dum episcopus, qui

It corrupteth the minds and manners of men: for **SERM.**
when that discipline is relaxed which was ordained to **LVII.**
guard truth and promote holiness; when men are grown
so licentious and stubborn as to condemn their superiors,
to disregard their wholesome laws and sober advice, there
can be no curb to restrain them, but down precipitantly
they run into all kind of vicious irregularities and ex-
cesses; when those bounds are taken away, whither will
men ramble? when those banks are broken down, what
can we expect but deluges of impious doctrine and
wicked practice, to overflow the ignorant and inconsiderate people?

Doth not indeed this practice evidently tend to the dissolution of the Church and destruction of Christianity? for when the *shepherds* are (as to conduct and efficacy) *taken away*, will not the *sheep* be scattered, or wander **Matt. xxvi.**
astray, like sheep without a shepherd, being bewildered in ^{81.}
various errors, and exposed as a prey to any wild beasts; to the *grievous wolves*, to the *ravenous lions*, to the wily foxes? here a fanatical enthusiast will snap them, there a profane libertine will worry them, there again a desperate atheist will tear and devour them^h.

Consult we but obvious experience, and we shall see what spoils and mines of faith, of good conscience, of common honesty and sobriety, this practice hath in a few years caused; how have atheism and infidelity, how have profaneness and dissoluteness of manners, how have all kinds of dishonesty and baseness grown up since men began to disregard the authority of their spiritual guides! what dismal tragedies have we in our age beheld acted upon this stage of our own country! what bloody wars and murders, (murders

unus est, et ecclesiæ præest superba quorundam præsumptione contemnitur.
Cypr. Ep. 69.

Hæc sunt initia hæreticorum, et ortus atque conatus schismaticorum male cogitantium ut sibi placeant, ut præpositum superbo tumore contemnunt. Sic de ecclesiâ receditur, sic altare profanum foris collocatur, sic contra pacem Christi, atque unitatem Dei rebellatur. *Cypr. Ep. 65.*

^h Τὸ τοῦ πάντων τῶν κακῶν αἴτιον, ὅτι τὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡφανίσθη, ὑδμία ἀδίδως, οὐδὲν φείδω, &c. *Chrys. in 2 Tim. Or. 2.*

SERM. of princes, of nobles, of bishops and priests!) what miserable oppressions, extortions, and rapines! what execrable seditions and rebellions! what barbarous animosities and feuds! what abominable treasons, sacrileges, perjuries, blasphemies! what horrible violations of all justice and honesty! And what, I pray, was the source of these things? where did they begin? where but at murmuring against, at rejecting, at persecuting the spiritual governors, at casting down and trampling on their authority, at slighting and spurning at their advice? Surely would men have observed the laws, or have hearkened to the counsels of those grave and sober persons, whom God had appointed to direct them, they never would have run into the commission of such enormities.

It is not to be omitted, that, in the present state of things, the guilt of disobedience to spiritual governors is increased and aggravated by the supervenient guilt of another disobedience to the laws of our prince and country. Before the secular powers (unto whom God hath committed the dispensation of justice, with the maintenance of peace and order, in reference to worldly affairs) did submit to our Lord, and became *nursing parents of the Church*, the power of managing ecclesiastical matters did wholly reside in spiritual guides; unto whom Christians, as the *peculiar* subjects of God, were obliged willingly to yield obedience; and refusing it, were guilty before God of spiritual disorder, faction, or schism: but now, after that political authority (out of pious zeal for God's service, out of a wise care to prevent the influences of disorder in spiritual matters upon the temporal peace, out of grateful return for the advantages the commonwealth enjoyeth from religion and the Church) hath pleased to back and fortify the laws of spiritual governors by civil sanctions, the knot of our obligation is tied faster, its force is redoubled, we by disobedience incur a double guilt, and offend God two ways, both as supreme governor of the world, and as king of the Church; to our schism against the Church we add rebellion against our prince, and so become no less bad citizens than bad

Christians. Some may perhaps imagine their disobedience hence more excusable, taking themselves now only thereby to transgress a political sanction: but (beside that even that were a great offence, the command of our temporal governors being sufficient, out of conscience to God's express will, to oblige us in all things not evidently repugnant to God's law) it is a great mistake to think the civil law doth anywise derogate from the ecclesiastical; that doth not swallow this up, but succoureth and corroborateth it; their concurrence yieldeth an accession of weight and strength to each; they do not by conspiring to prescribe the same thing either of them cease to be governors, as to right; but in efficacy the authority of both should thence be augmented, seeing the obligation to obedience is multiplied upon their subjects; and to disobey them is now two crimes, which otherwise should be but one.

SERM.
LVII.

SERMON LVIII.

OF OBEDIENCE TO OUR SPIRITUAL GUIDES AND GOVERNORS.

HEB. xiii. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

SERM. LVIII. SUCH is the nature of this duty, and such are the reasons enforcing the practice thereof: I shall only farther remove two impediments of that practice, and so leave this point.

1. One hindrance of obedience is this, that spiritual power is not despotical or compulsoꝝ, but parental or pastoral; that it hath no external force to abet it, or to avenge disobedience to its laws: they must not κατεξουσιάζαν, or κατακυριεύαν, (be imperious, or domineer,) they are not allowed to exercise violence, or to inflict bodily correction^a; but must rule in meek and gentle ways, directly influential upon the mind and conscience, (ways of rational persuasion, exhortation, admonition, reproof,) in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves;—convincing, rebuking, exhorting with all long suffering and doctrine; their word is their only weapon, their force of argument all the constraint they apply: hence men commonly do not stand in awe of them, nor are so sensible of

Matt. xx.

25.

Luke xxii.

26.

1 Pet. v. 3.

2 Tim. ii.

25. iv. 2.

1 Tim. iii. 3.

^a Μάλιστα γὰρ ἀπάντων Χριστιανῶς οὐκ ἔστιται πρὸς βίαν ἱκανοῦσθαι τὰ τῶν ἁμαρτανόντων πταίσματα, &c. Chrys. de Sacerd. 2.

Ἐνταῦθα οὐ βιαζόμενοι, ἀλλὰ πείθοντα δι' αὐτῶν ἁμῶν τὸν τοιοῦτον. Ibid.

their obligation to obey them; they cannot understand **SERM.**
why they should be frightened by words, or controlled by **LVIII.**
an unarmed authority.

But this in truth (things being duly considered) is so far from diminishing our obligation, or arguing the authority of our governors to be weak and precarious, that it rendereth our obligation much greater, and their authority more dreadful; for the sweeter and gentler their way of governing is, the more disingenuous and unworthy a thing it is to disobey it; not to be persuaded by reason, not to be allured by kindness, not to admit friendly advice, not to comply with the calmest methods of furthering our own good, is a brutish thing; he that only can be scared and scourged to duty, scarce deserveth the name of a man: it therefore doth the more oblige us, that in this way we are moved to action by love rather than fear. Yet if we would fear wisely and justly, (not like children, being frightened with formidable shapes and appearances, but like men, apprehending the real consequences of things,) we should the more fear these spiritual powers, because they are insensible: for that God hath commanded us to obey them, without assigning visible forces to constrain or chastise, is a manifest argument that he hath reserved the vindication of their authority to his own hand, which therefore will be infallibly certain, and terribly severe; so the nature of the case requireth, and so God hath declared it shall be: the sentence that is **Matt. xviii.**
upon earth pronounced by his ministers upon contumacious offenders, he hath declared himself ready to ratify **18.**
in heaven, and therefore most assuredly will execute it. As under the old law God appointed to the transgression of some laws, upon which he laid special stresses, the punishment of *being cut off from his people*; the execution of which punishment he reserved to himself, to be accomplished in his own way and time; so doth he now in like manner take upon him to maintain the cause of his ministers, and to execute the judgments decreed by them; and if so, we may consider that *it is a dreadful thing to* **Heb. x. 31.**
fall into the hands of the living God. Ecclesiastical autho-

SERM. rity therefore is not a shadow, void of substance or force,
 LVIII. but hath the greatest power in the world to support and
 assert it; it hath arms to maintain it most effectual and

2 Cor. x. 4. forcible, (those of which St. Paul saith; *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God,*—) it inflicteth chastisements far more dreadful than any secular power can inflict; for these only touch the body, those pierce the soul; these concern only our temporal state, those reach eternity itself; these at most yield a transitory smart, or kill the body, those produce endless torment, and (utterly as to all comfort in being) destroy the soul.

Spirituali
 gladio su-
 perbi et
 contuma-
 ces necan-
 tur, dum
 de ecclesia
 ejiciuntur.
 Cypr. Ep.
 61.

The punishment for extreme contumacy is called *delivery to Satan*; and is not this far worse than to be put into the hands of any gaoler or hangman? what are any cords of hemp or fetters of iron in comparison to those bands, of which it is said, *Whatever ye bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven*; which engage the soul in a guilt never to be loosed, except by sore contrition and serious repentance? what are any scourges to St. Paul's rod, lashing the heart and conscience with stinging remorse? what any axes or falchions to that *sword of the spirit*, which cutteth off a member from the body of Christ? what are any fagots and torches to that unquenchable *fire and brimstone* of the infernal lake? what, in fine, doth any condemnation here signify to that horrible curse, which devoteth an incorrigible soul to the bottomless pit?

It is therefore indeed a great advantage to this power that it is spiritual.

2. Another grand obstruction to the practice of this duty is, pretence to scruple about the lawfulness, or dissatisfaction in the expedience of that which our governors prescribe; that we are able to advance objections against their decrees; that we can espy inconveniences ensuing upon their orders; that we imagine the constitution may be reformed, so as to become more pure, more convenient and comely, more serviceable to edification; that we cannot fancy that to be best, which they enjoin: for removing this obstruction let me only propound some questions.

Cypr. Ep.
 50. 52. (p.
 97.)

Were not any government appointed in vain, if such **SERM.**
pretences might exempt or excuse from conformity to its **LVIII.**
orders? can such ever be wanting? Is there any thing de-
visable, which may not be impugned by some plausible Φιλοῖσις ὁ-
ρος ἡ λείπει,
ὅτι φιλονεικῶν
reason, which may not disgust a squeamish humour? Is μάχη. Socr.
Hist. vii. 31.
there any matter so clearly innocent, the lawfulness where-
of a weak mind will not question; any thing so firm and
solid, in which a small acuteness of wit cannot pick a hole;
any thing so indisputably certain, that whoever affecteth
to cavil may not easily devise some objections against it?

Is there any thing here that hath no inconveniences
attending it? are not in all human things conveniences
and inconveniences so mixed and complicated, that it is
impossible to disentangle and sever them? can there be any
constitution under heaven so absolutely pure and perfect,
that no blemish or defect shall appear therein? can any pro-
vidence of man foresee, any care prevent, any industry re-
medy all inconveniences possible? Is a reformation satis-
factory to all fancies anywise practicable; and are they
not fitter to live in the Platonic idea of a commonwealth
than in any real society, who press for such an one? To be
facile and complaisant in other cases, bearing with things
which do not please us, is esteemed commendable, a courte-
ous and humane practice: why should it not be much more
reasonable to condescend to our superiors, and comport with
their practice? is it not very discourteous to deny them the
respect which we allow to others, or to refuse that advan-
tage to public transactions which we think fit to grant
unto private conversation?

To what purpose did God institute a government, if
the resolutions thereof must be suspended till every man is
satisfied with them; or if its state must be altered so often
as any man can pick in it matter of offence or dislike; or
if the proceedings thereof must be shaped according to the
numberless varieties of different and repugnant fancies^b?

^b Οὐ γὰρ μόνον τὴν ἀρετὴν (πολιτείαν) δεῖ διαρρεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν δυνατήν. *Arist.*
Pol. iv. 1.

Si ubi jubeantur quaerere singulis liceat; pereunte obsequio etiam imperium
intercidit. *Tac.* i. p. 450. *Oitha.*

SERM. Are, I pray, the objections against obedience so clear
LVIII. and cogent, as are the commands which enjoin, and the reasons which enforce it? are the inconveniences adhering to it apparently so grievous, as are the mischiefs which spring from disobedience? do they in a just balance counterpoise the disparagement of authority, the violation of order, the disturbance of peace, the obstruction of edification, which disobedience produceth?

Do the scruples (or reasons, if we will call them so) which we propound, amount to such a strength and evidence, as to outweigh the judgment of those whom God hath authorized by his commission, whom he doth enable by his grace, to instruct and guide us? May not those, whose office it is to judge of such things, whose business it is to study for skill in order to that purpose, who have most experience in those affairs specially belonging to them, be reasonably deemed most able to judge both for themselves and us what is lawful, and what expedient? have they not eyes to see what we do, and hearts to judge concerning the force of our pretences, as well as we?

Qui fidei
et veritati
præsumus.
Cypr. Ep.
72.

Is it not a design of their office to resolve our doubts and void our scruples in such cases, that we may act securely and quietly, being directed by better judgments than our own? Are they not strictly obliged in conscience, are they not deeply engaged by interest, to govern us in the best manner? Is it therefore wisdom, is it modesty, is it justice for us to advance our private conceits against their most deliberate public resolutions? may we not in so doing mistake? may we not be blind or weak, (not to say fond, or proud, or perverse?) and shall those defects or defaults of ours evacuate so many commands of God, and render his so noble, so needful an ordinance quite insignificant?

Do we especially seem to be in earnest, or appear other-

^c Dixisti sane scrupulum tibi esse tollendum de animo, in quem incidisti; Incidisti sed tua credulitate irreligiosa, &c. *Cypr. Ep.* 69. (ad Florent.) vid. optime et appositè de hac re differentem.

wife than illuſively to palliate our naughty affections and finifter reſpects, when we ground the juſtification of our nonconformity upon dark ſubtilties and intricate quirks; which it is hard to conceive that we underſtand ourſelves, and whereof very perſpicacious men cannot apprehend the force? Do we think we ſhall be innocent men, becauſe we are ſmart ſophiſters? or that God will excuſe from our duty, becauſe we can perplex men with our diſcourſes? or that we are bound to do nothing, becauſe we are able to ſay ſomewhat againſt all things?

Would we not do well to conſider what huge danger they incur, and how maſſy a load of guilt they muſt undergo, upon whom ſhall be charged all thoſe ſad diſorders and horrid miſchiefs which are naturally conſequent on diſobedience? What if conſuſion of things, if corruption of manners, if oppreſſion of truth, if diſſolution of the Church do thence enſue; what a caſe then ſhall we be in, who conſer ſo much thereto? Would not ſuch conſiderations be apt to beget ſcruples far more diſquieting an honeſt and truly conſcientious mind, than any ſuch either profound ſubtilties or ſuperficial plauſibilities can do, which diſſenters are wont to allege? For needeth he not to have extreme reaſon (reaſon extremely ſtrong and evident) who dareth to reſuſe that obedience which God ſo plainly commandeth; by which his own authority is maintained; on which the ſafety, proſperity, and peace of the Church dependeth; in which the ſupport of religion, and the welfare of numberleſs ſouls is deeply concerned?

Did, let me farther aſk, the Apoſtles, when they ſettled orders in the church, when they impoſed what they conceived needful for edification and decency, when they inflicted ſpiritual chaſtiſements upon diſorderly walkers, regard ſuch pretences? or had thoſe ſelf-conceited and ſelf-willed people (who *obeyed* not their words, but *reſiſted* and rejected them) no ſuch pretences? had they nothing to ſay for themſelves, nothing to object againſt the apoſtolic orders and proceedings? They had ſurely; they failed not to find faults in the eſta bliſhment, and to pretend a kind of tender conſcience for their diſobedience;

SERM.
LVIII.

SERM. yet this hindered not, but that the Apostles condemned
LVIII. their misbehaviour and inflicted severe censures upon
 them?

Did not also the primitive bishops (and all spiritual governors down from the beginning every where almost to these days of contention and disorder) proceed in the same course; not fearing to enact such laws concerning indifferent matters and circumstances of religion, as seemed to them conducive to the good of the Church? Did not all good people readily comply with their orders, how painful soever, or disagreeable to flesh and blood, without contest or scruple? yet had not they as much wit, and no less conscience than ourselves? They who had wisdom enough to descry the truth of our religion through all the clouds of obloquy and disgrace, which it lay under; who had zeal and constancy to bear the hardest brunts of persecution against it; were they such fools as to see no fault, so stupid as to resent nothing, or so loose as to comply with any thing? No surely; they were in truth so wise as to know their duty, and so honest as to observe it.

If these considerations will not satisfy, I have done; and proceed to the next point of our duty, to which the precept in our text may extend, concerning the doctrine of our guides: in which respect it may be conceived to imply the following particulars to be performed by us, as instances, or parts, or degrees thereof.

1. We should readily and gladly address ourselves to hear them; not out of profane and wilful contempt: or slothful negligence declining to attend upon their instructions: there were of old those, of whom the Prophets complain, who would not so much as hearken to the words of those whom God sent unto them; but stopped their ears, *withdrew the shoulder, and hardened the neck, and would not hear*: there were those in the evangelical times, who did ἀπωθήναι τὸν λόγον, *thrust away the word of God, judging themselves unworthy of eternal life; who would not admit or hear the word of life*, and overtures of grace: propounded by the Apostles: there were Gadarenes, who beseeched our Lord himself to depart from their coasts: there

Neb. ix. 29.
 Prov. i. 24.
 Is. lxx. 12.
 lxvi. 4.
 Jer. vii. 13.
 vi. 10.
 Acts xiii.
 46.
 Matt. x. 14.
 Luke viii.
 37.

have always been *deaf adders, who stop their ears to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely*; no wonder then if now there be those who will not so much as allow a hearing to the messengers of God, and the guides of their soul: some out of a factious prejudice against their office, or their persons, or their way, do shun them, giving themselves over to the conduct of seducers; some out of a profane neglect of all religion, out of being wholly possessed with worldly cares and desires, out of stupidity and sloth, (indisposing them to mind any thing that is serious,) will not afford them any regard: all these are extremely blameable, offensive to God, and injurious to themselves. It is a heinous affront to God (implying an hostile disposition toward him, an unwillingness to have any correspondence with him) to refuse so much as audience to his ambassadors; it is an interpretative repulsing him: so of old he expressed it; *I, saith he, spake unto you, rising early and speaking, but ye heard not; I called you, but ye answered not*: so under the Gospel; *He, saith our Lord, that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth (or regardeth not) you despiseth me*; and, *We are ambassadors of Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God*. It is a starving our souls, depriving them of that food which God hath provided for them; it is keeping ourselves at distance from any means or possibility of being well informed and quickened to the practice of our duty, of being reclaimed from our errors and sins; it is the way to become hardened in impiety, or sinking into a reprobate sense. This is the first step to obedience; for *how can we believe, except we hear?* this is that which St. James urgeth, *Let every man be quick to hear*; and which St. Peter thus enjoineeth, *Like new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby*: we should especially be quick and ready to hear those whom God hath authorized and appointed to speak; we should desire to suck the milk of the word from those who are our spiritual parents and nurses.

2. We should hear them with serious, earnest attention

SERM. and consideration; so that we may well understand, may
LVIII. be able to weigh, may retain in memory, and may become duly affected with their discourses; we must not hear them drowsily and slightly, as if we were nothing concerned, or were hearing an impertinent tale; their word should not pass through the ears, and slip away without effect; but sink into the understanding, into the memory, into the heart; like *the good seed falling into a depth of earth*, able to afford it root and nourishment; therefore we must attend diligently thereto: *περισσότερας* Matt. xiii. 5. *ὄν δὲ προσέχων*, we should therefore give more abundant heed, as the Apostle saith, *to the things we hear, lest at any time we should let them slip*. This duty the nature
 Heb. ii. 1. and importance of their word requireth: *it is the word not of men*, but, *in truth, the word of the great God*, (his word as proceeding from him, as declaring his mind and will, as tendering his overtures of grace and mercy,) which as such challengeth great regard and awe; it informeth us of our chief duties, it furthereth our main interests, it guideth us into, it urgeth us forward in the
 1 Theff. ii. 13. way to eternal happiness; it is the word that is *able to save our souls, to render us wise unto salvation*; it therefore claimeth and deserveth from us most earnest attention; it is a great indignity and folly not to yield it.

3. We should to their instructions bring good dispositions of mind, such as may render them most effectual and fruitful to us; such as are right intention, candour, docility, meekness.

We should not be induced to hear them out of curiosity, (as *having itching ears*,) being desirous to hear *some new things*, some fine notions, some taking discourse; somewhat to fancy or talk pleasantly about, (as the Athenians heard St. Paul;) not out of censoriousness, or inclination to criticize and find fault, (as the Pharisees heard
 AGs xvii. 21. our Saviour, *laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him*;) not out of design to gratify our passions in hearing them, to reprove other persons, or for any such corrupt and sinister intention; but altogether out of pure design that

we may be improved in knowledge, and excited to the **SERM.**
practice of our duty. **LVIII.**

We should not come to hear them with minds imbued with ill prejudices and partial affections, which may obstruct the virtue and efficacy of their discourse, or may hinder us from judging fairly and truly about what they say; but with such freedom and ingenuity as may dispose us readily to yield unto and acquiesce in any profitable truth declared by them; like the generous Bereans, who received the word *μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας*, with all alacrity and readiness of mind, searching the Scriptures daily, ^{11.} whether these things were so; *ὡς ἀκριβήτως βεβέη*, like infants newly born, that come to the dug without any other inclination than to suck what is needful for their sustenance.

We should be docile and tractable, willing and apt to learn, shaking off all those indispositions of soul (all dullness and sluggishness, all peevishness and perverseness, all pride and self-conceitedness, all corrupt affection and indulgence to our conceits, our humours, our passions, our lusts and inordinate desires) which may obstruct our understanding of the word, our yielding assent to it, our receiving impression from it: there were those, concerning whom the Apostle said, that he could not proceed in his discourse, because they were *ῥαδιὰ τὰς ἀκοαῖς*, dull of hearing, (or sluggish in hearing,) who were indisposed to hear, and incapable to understand, because they would not be at the pains to rouse up their fancies, and fix their minds upon a serious consideration of things: there were those, who had a spirit of slumber, eyes not to see, and ears not to hear; who did hear with the ear, but not understand; seeing did see, but not perceive; for their heart had waxed gross, their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes were closed; such indocile persons there always have been, who, being stupified and perverted by corrupt affections, became incapable of bettering from good instruction: all such we should strive to free ourselves from, that we may perform this duty to our guides, and in meekness receive the engrafted word.

SERM. . These practices (of hearing, of attending, of coming
 LVIII. well disposed to instruction) are at least steps and degrees
 necessarily prerequisite to the obedience prescribed; and
 farther to press them all together upon us, we may con-
 sider, that it is strictly incumbent on them (under danger
 of heavy punishment and *woe*) *willingly, earnestly, with*
 all diligence and patience, to *labour* in teaching and ad-
 monishing us; they must *give attendance, and take heed*
unto their doctrine, that it may be *sound* and profitable;
 they must *preach the word, and be instant* upon it *in season,*
out of season, (that is, not only taking, but seeking and
 snatching all occasions to do it,) *reproving, rebuking, ex-*
horting with all longsuffering and doctrine; they must
warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom, that
they may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: as
 they are obliged in such manner to do these things, so
 there must be correspondent duties lying upon us, to re-
 ceive their doctrine readily, carefully, patiently, sincerely,
 and fairly: as they must be faithful dispensers of God's
 heavenly truth and holy mysteries, so we must be ob-
 sequious entertainers of them: imposing such commands
 on them doth imply reciprocal obligations in their hearers
 and scholars; otherwise their office would be vain, and their
 endeavours fruitless; God no less would be frustrated in
 his design, than we should be deprived of the advantages
 of their institution.

But farther, it is a more immediate ingredient of this
 duty, that

4. We should effectually be enlightened by their doc-
 trine, be convinced by their arguments persuading truth
 and duty, be moved by their admonitions and exhorta-
 tions to good practice; we should open our eyes to the
 light which they shed forth upon us, we should sur-
 render our judgment to the proofs which they allege,
 we should yield our hearts and affections pliable to their
 mollifying and warming discourses: it is their part to
 subdue our minds to *the obedience of faith*, and to subject
 our wills to the observance of God's commandments,
 2 Cor. x. 5. (*casting down imaginations, and every high thing that*

exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;) it must therefore answerably be our duty not to resist, not to hold out, not to persist obstinate in our errors or prejudices; to submit our minds to the power of truth, being willingly and gladly conquered by it; it must be our duty to subjugate our wills; to bend our inclinations, to form our affections to a free compliance of heart with the duties urged upon us; we should not be like those disciples, of whom our Lord complaineth thus; *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:* nor like the Jews, with whom St. Stephen thus expostulates; *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.* They should speak with power and efficacy; we therefore should not by our indispositions (by obstinacy of conceit or hardness of heart) obstruct their endeavours: they should be *co-workers of your joy*, (that is, working in us that faith and those virtues, which are productive of true joy and comfort to us;) we therefore should co-work with them toward the same end: they should edify us in knowledge and holiness; we should therefore yield ourselves to be fashioned and polished by them.

5. We should, in fine, obey their doctrine by conforming our practice thereto; this our Lord prescribed in regard even to the Jewish guides and doctors; *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do:* the same we may well conceive that he requireth in respect to his own ministers, the teachers of a better law, authorized to direct us by his own commission, and thereto more specially qualified by his grace: this is indeed the crown and completion of all; to hear signifieth nothing; to be convinced in our mind, and to be affected in our heart, will but aggravate our guilt, if we neglect practice: every sermon we hear, that sheweth us our duty, will in effect be an enditement upon us, will ground a sentence of condemnation, if we transgress it: for, as *the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for*

SERM.
LVIII.

Luke xxiv.
25.

Acts vii. 51.
1 Cor. iv.
20. ii. 4.

2 Cor. i. 24.
1 Cor. iii. 5.

Matt. xxiii.
2, 3.

Heb. vi. 7,
8. x. 26.

- SERM. LVIII.** *them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God, so that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto curfing, and its end is to be burned: and, Not the hearers of the law are just with God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. And it is a good advice, that of St.*
- Rom. ii. 13.** *James; Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves; it is, he intimateth, a fallacy some are apt to put upon themselves, to conceit they have done sufficiently when they have lent an ear to the word; this is the least part to be done in regard to it, practice is all in all; what is it to be shewed the way, and to know it exactly, if we do not walk in it, if we do not by it arrive to our journey's end, the salvation of our souls? To have waited upon our Lord himself, and hung upon his discourse, was not available; for when in the day of account some shall begin to allege, We have eaten and drunk before thee, and thou hast taught in our streets; our Lord will say, I know you not, whence are ye; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. And it is our Lord's declaration in the case, Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;—but every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.*
- Luke xiii. 26, 27.**
- Matt. vii. 24.**
- (John xiv. 21.)**
- Mark vi. 20.** *Many are very earnest to hear, they hear gladly, as Herod did St. John Baptist's homilies; they receive the word with joy, as the temporary believers in the parable did; they do, as those men did in the Prophet, delight to know God's ways, do ask of God the ordinances of justice, do take delight in approaching God; or as those in another Prophet, who speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord: and they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness: and, lo, thou art to them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and*
- Matt. xiii. 26.**
- Is. lviii. 2.**
- Ezek. xxxiii. 30, 31, 32.**

can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, **SERM. LVIII.**
 but they do them not: they for a time rejoice in the light **John v. 35.**
 of God's messengers, as those Jews did in the light of that
 burning and shining lamp, St. John the Baptist; but all
 comes to nothing; but they are backward and careless to
 perform, at least more than they please themselves, or
 what suiteth to their fancy, their humour, their appetite,
 their interest: many hearers will believe only what they
 like, or what suiteth to their prejudices and passions;
 many of what they believe will practise that only which
 forteth with their temper, or will serve their designs;
 they cannot conform to unpleasant and unprofitable doc-
 trines: sometimes care choketh the word; sometimes
 temptation of pleasure, of profit, of honour allureth;
 sometimes difficulties, hazards, persecutions, discourage
 from obedience to it.

These particulars are obvious, and by most will be con-
 sented to: there is one point which perhaps will more
 hardly be admitted, which therefore I shall more largely
 insist upon; it is this:

6. That as in all cases it is our duty to defer much
 regard to the opinion of our guides, so in some cases it
 behoveth us to rely barely upon their judgment and ad-
 vice; those especially among them who excel in dignity
 and worth, who are approved for wisdom and integrity;
 their definitions, or the declarations of their opinion, (es-
 pecially such as are exhibited upon mature deliberation
 and debate, in a solemn manner,) are ever very probable
 arguments of truth and expediency; they are commonly
 the best arguments which can be had in some matters,
 especially to the meaner and simpler sort of people. This
 upon many accounts will appear reasonable.

It is evident to experience, that every man is not ca-
 pable to judge, or able to guide himself in matters of
 this nature, (concerning divine truth and conscience.)
 There are *children in understanding*; there are men *weak* **Rom. xiv.**
in faith, (or knowledge concerning the faith;) there are **1. xv. 1, &c.**
xvi. 18.
idiots, ἀναφοι, (men not bad, but *simple*,) persons *occupying* **1 Cor. xiv.**
the room of the unlearned, unskilful in the word of righte- **16. iii. 2.**
viii. 10.

SERM. *ousness, who, as the Apostle saith; need that one should*
LVIII. *teach them which be the first principles of the oracles of*

Heb. v. 12. *God.*

*Vulgo non
 iudicium,
 non veritas.
 Tac.*

*"Απειρον δ'
 ὁῦμος. M.
 Ant.*

Eph. iv. 14. *The vulgar sort of men are as undiscerning and inju-
 dicious in all things, so peculiarly in matters of this na-
 ture, so much abstracted from common sense and expe-
 rience; whence we see them easily seduced into the
 fondest conceits and wildest courses by any slender arti-
 fice or fair pretence; like children, tossed to and fro, and
 carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight
 of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to
 deceive.*

There are also some particular cases, a competent in-
 formation and skill in which must depend upon improve-
 ments of mind acquired by more than ordinary study
 and experience; so that in them most people do want
 sufficient means of attaining knowledge requisite to guide
 their judgment or their practice: and for such persons in
 such cases it is plainly the best, the wisest, and the safest
 way, to rely upon the direction of their guides, assenting
 to what they declare, acting what they prescribe, going
 whither they conduct^d.

The very notion of guides, and the design of their
 office, doth import a difference of knowledge, and a need
 of reliance upon them in such cases; it signifieth, that we
 are in some measure ignorant of the way, and that they
 better know it; and if so, plain reason dictateth it fit that
 we should follow them: and indeed what need were there
 of guides, to what purpose should we have them, if we
 can sufficiently ken the way, and judge what we should
 do, without them?

In the state of learning, (in which the assigning us
 teachers supposeth us placed,) whatever our capacity may
 be, yet our judgment at least (for want of a full compre-
 hension of things, which must be discovered in order and

^d 'Αλλ' εἰδότες ἰστέους βέλτερον εἶναι τὰς ἑαυτῶν ἡνίας ἐκδιδόναι τεχνικαίους, ἢ
 ἄλλων ἡνιόχους εἶναι ἀναπιστήμονας, ὃ ἀκοὴν ὑποσθίνας μᾶλλον εὐγνώμονα, ἢ γλῶσ-
 σαν κινήν ἀπαλθετον. *Naz. Or. 1.*

—*sic calidus, et virtute robustus, &c. Cypr. Ep. 28. de Luciano.*

by degrees) is imperfect: in that state therefore it becometh us not to pretend exercise of judgment, but rather easily to yield assent to what our teachers, who see farther into the thing, do assert; *The learner, as Seneca* Regi debet, dum incipit se posse regere. Sen. Ep. 94. *faith, is bound to be ruled, while he beginneth to be able to rule himself.* SERM. LVIII.

Δεῖ μανθάνοντα πιστεύειν, A learner should in some measure be credulous; otherwise, as he will often fail in his judgment, so he will make little progress in learning; for if he will admit nothing on his master's word, if he will question all things, if he will continually be doubting and disputing, or contradicting and opposing his teacher, how can instruction proceed? He that presently will be his own master is a bad scholar, and will be a worse master. He that will fly before he is fledged, no wonder if he tumble down.

There are divers obvious and very considerable cases in which persons most contemptuous of authority, and refractory toward their guides, are constrained to rely upon the judgment of others, and are contented to do it, their conscience shewing them unable to judge for themselves: in admitting the literal sense of Scripture, according to translations; in the interpretation of difficult places, depending upon the skill of languages, grammar, and criticism, upon the knowledge of human arts and sciences, upon histories and ancient customs: in such cases, all illiterate persons (however otherwise diffident and disregardful of authority) are forced to see with the eyes of other men, to submit their judgment to the skill and fidelity of their learned guides, taking the very principles and foundations of their religion upon trust: and why then conso- nantly may they not do it in other cases; especially in the resolution of difficult, sublime, obscure, and subtle points, the comprehension whereof transcendeth their capacity?

SERMON LIX.

OF OBEDIENCE TO OUR SPIRITUAL GUIDES AND GOVERNORS.

HEB. xiii. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

SERM. BUT farther,
LIX.

The more to engage and incline us to the performing this part of our duty, (the regarding, prizing, confiding in the judgment of our guides,) we may consider the great advantages, both natural and supernatural, which they have to qualify them in order to such purposes.

1. They may reasonably be presumed more intelligent and skilful in divine matters than others; for as they have the same natural capacities and endowments with others, (or rather commonly somewhat better than others, as being designed and selected to this sort of employment,) so their natural abilities are by all possible means improved: it is their trade and faculty, unto which their education is directed; in acquiring ability toward which they spend their time, their care, their pains; in which
Heb. v. 14. they are continually versed and exercised, (*having, as the Apostle speaketh, by reason of use their senses exercised to discern both good and evil;*) for which also they employ their supplications and devotions to God.

Many special advantages they hence procure, needful or very conducive to a more perfect knowledge of such matters, and to security from errors; such as are con-

verſing with ſtudies, which enlarge a man's mind, and improve his judgment; a ſkill of diſquiſition about things; of fitting and canvaffing points coming under debate; of weighing the force of arguments, and diſtinguiſhing the colours of things; the knowledge of languages, in which the divine oracles are expreſſed; of ſciences, of hiſtories, of practices ſerving to the diſcovery and illuſtration of the truth; exerciſe in meditation, reading, writing, ſpeaking, diſputing, and conference, whereby the mind is greatly enlightened, and the reaſon ſtrengthened; acquaintance with variety of learned authors, who with great diligence have expounded the holy Scriptures, and with moſt accuracy diſcuſſed points of doctrine; eſpecially with ancient writers, who, living near the apoſtolic times and being immediately (or within few degrees mediately) their diſciples, may juſtly be ſuppoſed moſt helpful toward informing us what was their genuine doctrine, what the true ſenſe of their writings: by ſuch means as in other faculties, ſo in this of theology, a competent ſkill may be obtained; there is no other ordinary or probable way; and no extraordinary way can be truſted, now that men appear not to grow learned or wiſe by ſpecial inſpiration or miracle; after that all pretences to ſuch by-ways have been detected of impoſture, and do ſmell too rank of hypocrify.

Since then our guides are ſo advantageouſly qualified to direct us, it is in matters difficult and doubtful (the which require good meaſure of ſkill and judgment to determine about them) moſt reaſonable that we ſhould rely upon their authority, preferring it in ſuch caſes to our private diſcretion; taking it for more probable that they ſhould comprehend the truth than we (unaffiſted by them, and judging merely by our own glimmering light) can do; deeming it good odds on the ſide of their doctrine againſt our opinion or conjecture.

They have alſo another peculiar advantage toward judging ſincerely of things, by their greater retirement from the world and diſengagement from ſecular intereſts; the which ordinarily do deprave the underſtandings and

SERM. pervert the judgments of men, disposing them to accom-
 LIX. modate their conceits to the maxims of worldly policy,

2 Tim. ii. 4. or to the vulgar apprehensions of men, many of which
 are false and base: by such abstraction of mind from
 worldly affairs, together with fastening their meditation
 on the best things (which their calling necessarily doth
 put them upon) more than is usual to other men, they
 commonly get principles and habits of simplicity and in-
 tegrity, which qualify men both to discern truth better,
 and more faithfully to declare it.

Seeing then in every faculty the advice of the skilful
 is to be regarded, and is usually relied upon; and in
 other affairs of greatest importance we scruple not to pro-
 ceed so; seeing we commit our life and health (which are
 most precious to us) to the physician, observing his pre-
 scriptions commonly without any reason, sometimes
 against our own sense; we intrust our estate, which is so
 dear, with the lawyer, not contesting his advice; we put
 our goods and safety into the hands of a pilot, sleeping
 securely whilst he steereth us as he thinketh fit; seeing
 in many such occasions of common life we advisedly do re-
 nounce or wave our own opinions, absolutely yielding to
 the direction of others, taking their authority for a better
 argument or ground of action than any which our con-
 ceit or a bare consideration of the matter can suggest to
 us; admitting this maxim for good, that it is a more ad-
 visable and safe course in matters of consequence to fol-
 low the judgment of wiser men than to adhere to our
 own apprehensions^a: seeing it is not wisdom (as every
 man thinks) in a doubtful case to act upon disadvantage,
 or to venture upon odds against himself, and it is plainly
 doing thus to act upon our own opinion against the judg-
 ment of those who are more improved in the way, or
 better studied in the point than ourselves; seeing in other

^a "Ος ἂν ἡγήσωνται περὶ τὰ συμφέροντα ἑαυτοῖς φρονιμώτερον ἑαυτῶν εἶναι, τούτῃ
 ἀνδραγαθῶς ὑπερηδώς πείθονται. *Xen. Pæd.* 1.

^b "Εν μὲν τῷ πλείν πείθεσθαι διὰ τῆς κυβερνήτης, ἐν δὲ τῷ ζῆν τῷ λογίζεσθαι δυναμίνῃ
 βίῳ. *Aristonymus apud Stob. tom. ii. tit. 2.*

cases these are the common approved apprehensions and practices; and seeing in this case there is plainly the same reason, for that there are difficulties and intricacies in this no less than in other faculties, which need good skill to resolve them; for that in these matters we may easily slip, and by error may incur huge danger and damage; why then should we not here take the same course, following (when no other clearer light, or prevalent reason occurreth) the conduct and advice of our more skilful guides? especially considering, that, beside ordinary, natural, and acquired advantages, they have other supernatural both obligations to the well discharging this duty, and assistances toward it: For,

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2. We may consider, that they are by God appointed and empowered to instruct and guide us: it is their special office, not assumed by themselves, or constituted by human prudence, but ordained and settled by divine wisdom for our edification in knowledge, and direction in practice: they are God's messengers, purposely sent by him, selected and separated by his instinct for this work: they are by him given for the perfecting of the saints, and edifying the body of Christ: it is by God's warrant, and in his name that they speak; which giveth especial weight to their words, and no mean ground of assurance to us in relying upon them: for who is more likely to know God's mind and will, who may be presumed more faithful in declaring them, than God's own officers and agents? those whose great duty, whose main concernment it is to speak not their own sense, but the word of God? They are God's mouth, by whom alone ordinarily he expresseth his mind and pleasure; by whom he entreateth us to be reconciled in heart and practice to him: what they say therefore is to be received as God's word, except plain reason upon due examination do forbid.

Rom. x. 13.
Acts xiii. 2.
Eph. iv. 11,
12.
1 Cor. xii.
28.
1 Tim. i.
11, 12. ii. 7.
Tit. i. 3.
1 Thess. ii.
4.

2 Cor. v.
20.

If they by office are teachers, or masters in doctrine, then we answerably must in obligation be disciples, which

^b Jer. iii. 15. I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. *Cyp. Ep. 55.*

SERM. implies admitting their doctrine and proficiency in know-
 LIX. ledge thereby: if they are appointed shepherds, then must we be their sheep, to be led and fed by them; if they are God's messengers, we must yield some credence, and embrace the message uttered by them; so the Prophet Mal. ii. 7. *telleth us: The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts:* so the Law of old enjoined; Deut. xvii. 11. *—According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do; thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand nor to the left:* so our Lord also, in regard to the Scribes and Pharisees, saith, *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's chair: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do;* upon account of their office, whatever they direct to (not repugnant to the divine law) was to be observed by the people; and surely in doubtful cases, when upon competent inquiry no clear light offereth itself, it cannot be very dangerous to follow their guidance whom God hath appointed and authorized to lead us; if we err doing so, we err wisely in the way of our duty, and so no great blame will attend our error.

3. We may consider that our guides as such have special assistance from God; to every vocation God's aid is congruously afforded; but to this (the principal of all others, the most important, most nearly related to God, and most peculiarly tending to his service) it is in a special manner most assuredly and plentifully imparted.

1 Pet. iv. 10. They are *stewards of God's various grace;* and they who dispense grace to others cannot want it themselves: 1 Cor. iii. 9. they are *cooperators with God,* and God consequently doth cooperate with them; it is God who doth *ἰσχυρῶς*, 2 Cor. iii. 5. *render them sufficient to be ministers of the New Testament;* Phil. ii. 13. and they *minister of the ability which God supplieth;* every 1 Pet. iv. 11, spiritual labourer is obliged to say with St. Paul, *By the 1 Cor. xv. 10. grace of God I am what I am—I have laboured, yet not I; but the grace of God, which was with me.*

Eph. iv. 11, 12. God's having given them, as St. Paul saith, to the

Church, doth imply that God hath endowed them with **SERM.**
 special ability, and furthereth them (in their conscionable **LIX.**
 discharge of their ministry) with aid requisite to the de- ^{1 Cor. xii.}
 signs of *perfecting the saints, and edifying the body* in ^{28.}
 knowledge, in virtue, in piety.

As the Holy Ghost doth constitute them in their charge,
 (according to that of St. Paul in the Acts, *Take heed* ^{Acts xx. 30.}
unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy
Ghost hath made you overseers,) so questionless he doth
 enable and assist them in administering their function.
 There is a gift (of spiritual ability and divine succour) ^{1 Tim. iv.}
 imparted by their consecration to this office, with *the* ^{14.}
laying on the hands of the presbytery, joined with hum- ^{2 Tim. i. 6.}
 ble supplications for them, and solemn benedictions in
 God's name upon them. The divine Spirit, which *distrib-*
uteth, as he seeth good, unto every member of the Church
 needful supplies of grace, doth bestow on them in com- ^{1 Cor. xii.}
 petent measure *the word of wisdom* and *the word of know-* ^{7, &c.}
ledge requisite for their employment. ^{Eph. iv. 16.}
^{Rom. xii.}
^{5, 6.}

God of old did in extraordinary ways visibly commu-
 nicate his Spirit unto his prophets and agents; the same
 he did liberally pour out upon the Apostles, and first
 planters of the Gospel; the same questionless he hath not
 withdrawn from those, who under the evangelical dis-
 pensation (which is peculiarly the *ministration of the Spirit,* ^{2 Cor. iii. 6.}
 unto which the aid of God's Spirit is most proper and
 most needful) do still by a settled ministry supply the
 room of those extraordinary ministers; but imparteth it
 to them in a way although more ordinary and occult,
 yet no less real and effectual, according to proportions
 answerable to the exigencies of need and occasion; and
 by the influence hereof upon the pastors of his Church it
 is, that our Lord accomplisheth his promise to be *with it* ^{Matt.}
until the end of the world. ^{xxviii. 20.}

Clavis scientiæ, the key of knowledge spiritual, is one of ^{Luke xi.}
 those keys which he hath given to them, whereby they ^{52.}
 are enabled to open the kingdom of heaven.

Great reason therefore we have to place an especial con-
 fidence in their direction; for whom can we more safely

SERM. follow than those whom (upon such grounds of divine declarations and promises) we may hope that God doth guide; so that consequently in following them we do in effect follow God himself? *He that heareth you heareth me*, might be said, not only because of their relation unto Christ; but because their word proceedeth from his inspiration, being no other than his mind conveyed through their mouth.

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4. We may also for our encouragement to confide in our guides consider, that they are themselves deeply concerned in our being rightly guided; their present comfort, their salvation hereafter depending upon the faithful and careful discharge of their duty herein: they must render an account for it; so that if by their wilful or negligent miscarriage we do fall into dangerous error or sin, they do thence not only forfeit rich and glorious rewards, (assigned to those *who turn many unto righteousness*;) but incur woful punishment; this doth assure their integrity, and render our confidence in them very reasonable: for as we may safely trust a pilot who hath no less interest than ourselves in the safe conveyance of the vessel to port; so may we reasonably confide in their advice whose salvation is adventured with ours in the same bottom, or rather is wrapped up and carried in ours: it is not probable they will (at least designedly) misguide us to their own extreme damage, to their utter ruin: *if they do not warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, God hath said that he will require his blood at their hands*; and is it likely they wittingly should run such a hazard, that they should purposely cast away the souls for which they are so certainly accountable? it is our Apostle's enforcement of the precept in our text; *Obeys them that guide you; for they watch for your souls as they that must give an account*: which argumentation is not only grounded upon the obligations of ingenuity and gratitude, but also upon considerations of discretion and interests; we should obey our guides in equity and honesty; we may do it advisedly, because they, in regard to their own accounts at the final judgment, are obliged to be careful for the good of our souls.

Ezek. iii.
18. xxxiii.
2, 8.

Upon these considerations, it is plainly reasonable to SERM.
follow our guides in all matters wherein we have no LIX.
other very clear and certain light of reason or revelation
to conduct us : the doing so is indeed (which is farther
observable) not only wise in itself, but safe in way of pre-
vention, that we be not seduced by other treacherous
guides ; it will not only secure us from our own weak
judgments, but from the frauds of those *who lie in wait* Eph. iv. 14.
to deceive. The simpler sort of men will in effect be al-
ways led, not by their own judgment, but by the autho-
rity of others ; and if they be not fairly guided by those
whom God hath constituted and assigned to that end,
they will be led by the nose by those who are concerned
to seduce them : so reason dictateth that it must be, so
experience sheweth it ever to have been ; that the people,
whenever they have deserted their true guides, have soon
been hurried by impostors into most dangerous errors and
extravagant follies ; being *carried about with divers and* Heb. xiii.
strange doctrines ; being like children, tossed to and fro Eph. iv. 14.
with every wind of doctrine.

It is therefore a great advantage to us, and a great
mercy of God, that there are (by God's care) provided
for us such helps, upon which we may commonly for our
guidance in the way to happiness more safely rely, than
upon our own judgments, liable to mistake, and than upon
the counsel of others, who may be interested to abuse
us ; very foolish and very ingrateful we are, if we do not
highly prize, if we do not willingly embrace this advan-
tage.

I farther add, that as wisdom may induce, so modesty
and humility should dispose us to follow the direction of
our guides : *Ye younger, saith St. Peter, submit yourselves* 1 Pet. v. 5.
unto the elder, (that is, ye inferiors to your superiors, ye
that are the flock to your pastors,) *and,* subjoineth he im-
mediately, *be clothed with humility ;* signifying, that it is
a point of humility to yield that submission ; every modest
and humble person is apt to distrust his own, and to sub-
mit to better judgments ; and, *Not to lean to our under-* Prov. iii. 5,

SERM. *standing, not to be wise in our own eyes, not to seem to*
 LIX. *know any thing, not to seem any body to oneself, in humi-*

Rom. xii.
 3, 10.
 Gal. vi. 3.
 Phil. ii. 3.
 1 Cor. viii.
 2.
 1 Tim. vi.
 4.

lity to prefer others before ourselves, are divine injunctions, chiefly applicable to this case, in reference to our spiritual guides; for if it be pride or culpable immodesty to presume ourselves wiser than any man, what is it then to prefer ourselves in that respect before our teachers; as indeed we do, when without evident reason we disregard, or dissent from their opinion?

It is then a duty very reasonable, and a very commendable practice, to rely upon the guidance of our pastors in such cases, wherein surer direction faileth, and we cannot otherwise fully satisfy ourselves.

Neither in doing so (against some appearances of reason, or with some violence to our private conceits) do we act against our conscience, but rather truly according to it; for conscience (as the word in this case is used) is nothing else but an opinion in practical matters, grounded upon the best reason we can discern: if therefore in any case the authority of our guides be a reason outweighing all other reasons apparent, he that in such a case, notwithstanding other arguments less forcible, doth conform his judgment and practice thereto, therein exactly followeth conscience; yea, in doing otherwise, he would, thwart and violence his own conscience, and be self-condemned, adhering to a less probable reason in opposition to one more probable.

I do not hereby mean to assert, that we are obliged indifferently (with an implicit faith, or blind obedience) to believe all that our teachers say, or to practise all they bid us: for they are men, and therefore subject to error and sin; they may neglect or abuse the advantages they have of knowing better than others; they may sometimes, by infirmity, by negligence, by pravity, fail in performing faithfully their duty toward us; they may be swayed by temper, be led by passion, be corrupted by ambition or avarice, so as thence to embrace and vent bad doctrines: we do see our pastors often dissenting and

clashing among themselves, sometimes with themselves, SERM.
so as to change and retract their own opinions ^c. LIX.

We find the prophets of old complaining of priests, of
pastors, of elders and prophets, who *handled the law, yet* (Jer. ii. 8.)
were ignorant of God; who erred in vision, and stumbled Isa. xxviii.
in judgment; who were profane, brutish, light, and treach- 7.
erous persons; who polluted the sanctuary, and did violence Jer. x. 21.
to the law, and profaned holy things; who handled the xii. 10.
law, yet knew not God; from whom the law and counsel Jer. xxiii.
did perish; who taught for hire, and divined for money; 11.
who themselves departed out of the way, and caused many (Jer. xviii.
to stumble, and corrupted the covenant of Levi; who de- 18. v. 31.
stroyed and scattered the sheep of God's pasture. vi. 13.)
Zeph. iii. 4.
Ezek. xxii.
26.
Mal. i. 6.
Ezek. vii.
26.

There were in our Saviour's time guides, *of the fer-
ment of whose doctrine good people were bid to beware; Mic. iii. 11.
who transgressed and defeated the commandment of God Mal. ii. 8, 9.
by their traditions; who did take away the key of know- Jer. xxiii.
ledge, so that they would not enter themselves into the 11. xii. 10.
kingdom of heaven, nor would suffer others to enter; blind * Matt. xvi.
guides, who both themselves did fall, and drew others 6, 12.
into the ditch of noxious error and wicked practice: the Luke xii. 1.
followers of which guides did in vain worship God, ob- Matt. xv.
serving for doctrine the precepts of men. 2, 6.
Luke xi. 52.
Matt. xv.
14.
Matt. xv. 9.

There have not since the primitive times of the Gospel
wanted those who (indulging to ambition, avarice, curi-
osity, faction, and other bad affections) have depraved and
debased religion with noxious errors and idle supersti-
tions; such as St. Bernard describeth, &c.

We are, in matters of such infinite concernment to our
eternal welfare, in wisdom and duty obliged not wholly
without farther heed or care to trust the diligence and in-
tegrity of others, but to consider and look about us, using
our own reason, judgment, and discretion, so far as we
are capable; we cannot in such a case be blamed for too
much circumspection and caution.

We are not wholly blind, not void of reason, not desti-

^c If. iii. 12. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and de-
stroy the way of thy paths.

SERM. tute of fit helps; in many cases we have competent abi-
LIX. lity to judge, and means sufficient to attain knowledge:
 we are therefore concerned to use our eyes, to employ
 our reason, to embrace and improve the advantages vouch-
 safed us.

We are accountable personally for all our actions, as
 agreeable or cross to reason; if we are mistaken by our
 own default, or misled by the ill guidance of others, we
 Ezek. iii. 18. shall however deeply suffer for it, and *die in our iniquity*;
 the ignorance or error of our guides will not wholly ex-
 cuse us from guilt, or exempt us from punishment; it is
 fit therefore that we should be allowed, as to the sum of
 the matter, to judge and choose for ourselves: for if our
 salvation were wholly placed in the hands of others, so
 that we could not but in case of their error or default
 miscarry, our ruin would be inevitable, and consequently
 not just: we should perish without blame, if we were
 bound, as a blind and brutish herd, to follow others.

We, in order to our practice, (which must be regulated
 by faith and knowledge,) and toward preparing ourselves
 for our grand account, are obliged to get a knowledge
 Rom. xii. 2. and persuasion concerning our duty; *to prove* (or search
 Eph. v. 10. and examine) *what is that good, and acceptable, and per-
 fect will of God*; for ignorance, if anywise by our endea-
 vour vincible, will not secure us: *He that, saith our Lord
 Luke xii. 48. and Judge, knew not, and did commit things worthy of
 stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes*; (few; not in
 themselves, but comparatively to those which shall be
 inflicted on them who transgress against knowledge and
 conscience.)

We are bound to study truth, to improve our minds in
 the knowledge and love of it, to be firmly persuaded of
 it in a rational way; so that we be not easily shaken, or
 seduced from it.

The Apostles do charge it upon us as our duty and
 2 Cor. viii. concernment, that we *abound in faith and knowledge*;
 7. that we *be rooted and built up in Christ, and stablished in
 Col. ii. 7. the faith, so as to be stedfast, and unmovable, not to be
 1 Cor. xv. 58. soon shaken in mind, or troubled; to grow up and increase*
 2 Thess. ii. 2. *Col. i. 10. 2 Pet. iii. 18. ii. 2. Eph. iv. 15.*

in all divine knowledge; that the word of God should dwell SERM.
richly in us in all wisdom; that we should be filled with LIX.
all knowledge, so as to be able to teach and admonish one Col. iii. 16.
another; that our love should abound more and more in Rom. xv. 14.
knowledge and all judgment, that we may approve things Heb. v. 12.
Phl. i. 9,
excellent, (or scan things different;) that we be enriched 10.
in all the word, (that is, in all the doctrine of the Gospel,) 1 Cor. i. 5.
and in all knowledge; that we be filled in the knowledge Col. i. 9.
of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
that we should not be unwise, but understanding what the Eph. v. 17.
will of the Lord is; that we should be perfect and complete Col. iv. 12.
in all the will of God, (that is, first in the knowledge of
it, then in compliance with it;) that in understanding we 1 Cor. xiv.
should not be children, but perfect men. 20.
Heb. v. 12.

We are likewise by them commanded to take heed of Matt. vii.
false prophets; to try the spirits whether they are of God; 15.
to see that no man deceive us; to look that no man spoil us 1 John iv. 1.
by vain deceit; to try all things, and hold fast that which Matt. xxiv.
is good; which precepts imply, that we should be fur- 4.
nished with a good faculty of judgment, and competent Eph. v. 6.
knowledge in the principal matters of Christian doctrine, Col. ii. 8,
concerning both the mysteries of faith and rules of prac- 18.
tice. Our Lord himself and his Apostles did not upon 1 Thess. v.
other terms than of rational consideration and discussion, 21.
exact credit and obedience to their words; they did not
insist barely upon their own authority, but exhorted their
disciples to examine strictly, and judge faithfully concern-
ing the truth and reasonableness of their doctrine: *Search* John v. 39.
the Scriptures, for they testify of me; If I do not the works John x. 37,
of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe 38. xv. 22,
not me, believe the works: so our Lord appealed to their 24. xii. 48.
reason, proceeding upon grounds of Scripture and com-
mon-sense: and, *I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I* 1 Cor. x.
say; so St. Paul addressed his discourse to his disciples; 15.
otherwise we should be incapable to observe them.

We are also bound to defer the principal regard to
God's wisdom and will, so as, without reservation or ex-
ception, to embrace whatever he doth say, to obey what
he positively doth command, whatever authority doth

SERM. contradict his word; or cross his command: in such cases

LIX. we may remonstrate with the Apostles, *If it be just before*
Acts iv. 19. *God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye;*
Acts v. 29. and, *We ought to obey God rather than men:* we may de-
Gal. i. 8. nounce with St. Paul; *If an angel from heaven preach*
any other gospel, let him be accursed.

Rom. xiv. 23. We are obliged always to act *with faith*, (that is, with
a persuasion concerning the lawfulness of what we do;)

Rom. xiv. 23. for, *whatever is not of faith, is sin:* we should never condemn
ourselves in what we try or embrace.

These things considered, we may, and it much behoveth us, reserving due respect to our guides, with humility and modesty to weigh and scan their dictates and their orders; lest by them unawares we be drawn into error or
Acts xvii. 11. *fin; like the ingenuous Bereans, who did ἀνακρίναντες τὰς γραφάς, search and examine the Scriptures, if those things*
2 Cor. i. 24. *were so.* Our guides are but the *helpers*, they are not lords of our faith; the Apostles themselves were not.

We may, and are bound, if they tell us things evidently repugnant to God's word, or to sound reason and common sense, to dissent from them; if they impose on us things evidently contrary to God's law, to forbear compliance with them; we may in such cases appeal *ad legem et testimonium*; we must not admit a *non obstante* to God's law.

If. viii. 20. *Plebs timens Dominum se parare se debet a peccatore præposito.*
Cypr. If other arguments, weighed in the balance of honest and impartial reason, with cautious and industrious consideration, do overpoise the authority of our guides; let us in God's name adhere to them, and follow our own judgments; it would be a violation of our conscience, a prevarication toward our own souls, and a rebellion against God to do otherwise: when against our own mind, so carefully informed, we follow the dictates of others, we like fools rashly adventure and prostitute our souls.

This proceeding is nowise inconsistent with what we delivered before; for this due wariness in examining, this reservation in assenting, this exception in practice, in some cases, wherein the matter hath evidence, and we a faculty to judge, doth nowise hinder but that we should defer

much regard to the judgment of our guides; that we should in those cases, wherein no light discovereth itself SERM. LIX. outshining their authority, rely upon it; that where our eyes will not serve clearly to direct us, we should use theirs; where our reason faileth to satisfy us, we should acquiesce in theirs; that we should regard their judgments so far, that no petty scruple emerging, no faint semblance of reason should prevail upon us to dissent from their doctrine, to reject their advice, to disobey their injunctions.

In fine, let us remember, that the mouth of truth, which bid us to *beware of the bad doctrine* of those who *sate in Moses's chair*, did also charge us to *observe all they taught and enjoined*; that is, all not certainly repugnant to the divine law. In effect, if we dissent from the advices of our sober teachers, appointed for us by God, we shall in the end have occasion to bewail with him in the Proverbs: *How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!* Matt. xv. 14. xxiii. 3. Prov. v. 12, 13.

To these things I shall only add one rule, which we may well suppose comprised in the precept we treat upon; which is, that at least we forbear openly to dissent from our guides, or to contradict their doctrine; except only, if it be not so false (which never, or rarely can happen among us) as to subvert the foundations of faith, or practice of holiness. If we cannot be internally convinced by their discourses, if their authority cannot sway with us against the prevalence of other reasons, yet may we spare outwardly to oppose them, or to slight their judgment; for doing thus doth tend, as to the disgrace of their persons, so to the disparagement of their office, to an obstructing the efficacy of their ministry, to the infringement of order and peace in the Church: for when the inconsiderate people shall see their teachers distrusted and disrespected; when they perceive their doctrine may be challenged and opposed by plausible discourses; then will they hardly trust them, or comply with them in matters most certain and necessary; than which disposition in the

SERM. people there cannot happen any thing more prejudicial or
LIX. baneful to the Church.

But let thus much serve for the obedience due to the doctrine of our guides; let us consider that which we owe to them in reference to their conversation and practice.

The following their practice may well be referred to this precept; for that their practice is a kind of living doctrine, a visible law, or rule of action; and because indeed the notion of a guide primarily doth imply example; that he which is guided should respect the guide as a precedent, being concerned to walk after his footsteps.

Most of the reasons, which urge deference to their judgment in teaching, do in proportion infer obligation to follow their example; (which indeed is the most easy and clear way of instruction to vulgar capacity; carrying with it also most efficacious encouragement and excitement to practice :) they are obliged, and it is expected from them, to live with especial regularity, circumspection, and strictness of conversation; they are by God's grace especially disposed and enabled to do so; and many common advantages they have of doing so; (a more perfect knowledge of things, firmness of principles, and clearness of notions; a deeper tincture, and more favourable relish of truth, attained by continual meditation thereon; consequently a purity of mind and affection, a retirement from the world and its temptation, freedom from distraction of worldly care and the encumbrances of business, with the like.)

They are often charged to be exemplary in conversation, as we before shewed, and that involveth a correspondent obligation to follow them. They must, like

John v. 35. St. John Baptist, *be burning and shining lights; stars in*
 Rev. xvi. *God's right hand; lights of the world; whose light should*
 20. *shine before men, that men may see their good works; and*
 Matt. v. 14, *by their light direct their steps.*
 16.

They are proposed as copies, which signifies that we must in our practice transcribe them.

We are often directly commanded to imitate them; *as*

μιμησαὶ τὴν πίσιν, *whose faith imitate ye, (that is, their* SERM.
faithful perseverance in the doctrine and practice of Chri- LIX.
stianity,) saith the Apostle in this chapter.

Their conversation is safely imitable in all cases wherein no better rule appeareth, and when it doth not appear discordant from God's law and the dictates of sound reason; for supposing that discordance, we cease to be obliged to follow them; as when our Lord prescribeth in respect to the Pharisees; *Whatever they bid you observe,* Matt. xxiii. *that observe and do; but do not after their works; for they*^s *say and do not.*

It is indeed easier for them to speak well than to do well; their doctrine therefore is more commonly a sure guide than their practice; yet when there wanteth a clearer guidance of doctrine, their practice may pass for instructive, and a probable argument or warrant of action.

SERMON LX.

OF SELF-LOVE IN GENERAL.

2 TIM. iii. 2.

For men shall be lovers of themselves.

SERM.
LX.

Καιροὶ χα-
λεροὶ ἐνέ-
σονται.

ST. PAUL in this place out of a prophetical spirit instructing or warning his disciple Timothy, concerning *difficult times*, or the calamitous state of things, which should ensue, induced upon the world, as it useth to happen, by a general prevalency of vicious dispositions and practices among men, doth thence take occasion, by a specification of their vices, to characterize the persons who should concur to produce that hard state.

Among those vices he placeth self-love in the van, as the capital and leading vice; intimating thereby, that it is of all in its nature most heinous, or in its influence most noxious^a.

This indeed is of all vices the most common, so deeply radicated in our nature, and so generally overspreading the world, that no man thoroughly is exempted from it, most men are greatly tainted with it, some are wholly possessed and acted by it: this is the root from which all other vices do grow, and without which hardly any sin could subsist; the chief vices especially have an obvious and evident dependence thereon.

All impiety doth involve a loving ourselves in undue

^a Hæc omnia mala ab eo velut fonte manantia, quod primum posuit, seipsum amantes. *August. in Joh. Tract. 123.*

manner and measure; so that we set ourselves in our SERM.
 esteem and affection before God; we prefer our own con LX.
 ceits to his judgment and advice; we raise our pleasure
 above his will and authority; we bandy forces with him,
 and are like the profane Belshazzar, of whom it is said,
Thou hast lifted up thyself against (or above) the Lord of Dan. v. 23.
 heaven.

From hence particularly, by a manifest extraction, are derived those chief and common vices, pride, ambition, envy, avarice, intemperance, injustice, uncharitableness, peevishness, stubbornness, discontent, and impatience. For,

We overvalue ourselves, our qualities and endowments, our powers and abilities; our fortunes and external advantages; hence are we so proud, that is, so lofty in our conceits, and fastuous in our demeanour.

We would be the only men, or most considerable in the world; hence are we ambitious, hence continually with unsatiable greediness we do affect and strive to procure increase of reputation, of power, of dignity.

We would engross to ourselves all sorts of good things in highest degree; hence enviously we become jealous of the worth and virtue, we grudge and repine at the prosperity of others; as if they defalked somewhat from our excellency, or did eclipse the brightness of our fortune.

We desire to be not only full in our enjoyment, but free and absolute in our dominion of things; not only secure from needing the succour of other men, but independent in regard to God's providence; hence are we so covetous of wealth, hence we so eagerly scrape it, and so carefully hoard it up.

We can refuse our dear selves no satisfaction, although unreasonable or hurtful; therefore we so readily gratify sensual appetites in unlawful or excessive enjoyments of pleasure.

Being blinded or transported with fond dotage on ourselves, we cannot discern or will not regard what is due to others; hence are we apt upon occasion to do them wrong.

SERM. Love to ourselves doth in such manner suck in and
 LX. swallow our spirits, doth so pinch in and contract our
 hearts, doth according to its computation so confine and
 abridge our interests, that we cannot in our affection
 or in real expression of kindness tend outwards; that
 we can afford little good-will, or impart little good to
 others.

Deeming ourselves extremely wise and worthy of regard, we cannot endure to be contradicted in our opinion, or crossed in our humour; hence upon any such occasion our choler riseth, and easily we break forth into violent heats of passion.

From the like causes it is, that we cannot willingly stoop to due obeisance of our superiors, in reverence to their persons, and observance of their laws; that we cannot contentedly acquiesce in the station or portion assigned us by Providence; that we cannot patiently support our condition, or accept the events befalling us.

In fine, if surveying all the several kinds of naughty dispositions in our souls, and of miscarriages in our lives, we do scan their particular nature, and search into their original causes; we shall find inordinate self-love to be a main ingredient and a common source of them all: so that a divine of great name had some reason to affirm, that original sin (or that innate distemper from which men generally become so very prone to evil and averse to good) doth consist in self-love, disposing us to all kinds of irregularity and excess^b: St. Paul therefore might well set this in the front of all those sins, which depraved the age he spake of; they having all such a dependence on it.

It is therefore very requisite that we should well understand this fault, that we may be the better able to curb and correct it; to which purpose I shall endeavour, by God's help, somewhat to declare its nature.

^b Est ergo ista ad peccandum amore sui propensio, peccatum originale, &c. Zuingl. apud Bell. de Amiff. grat. iv. 3.

The word *self-love* is ambiguous; for all self-love is SERM.
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not culpable; there is a necessary and unavoidable, there is an innocent and allowable; there is a worthy and commendable self-love.

There is a self-love originally implanted by God himself in our nature, in order to the preservation and enjoyment of our being; the which is common to us with all creatures, and cannot anywise be extirpated; for *no man*, Eph. v. 29. as St. Paul saith, *ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*: every man living, by a natural and necessary instinct, is prompted to guard his life, shunning all dangers threatening its destruction; to purvey for the support and convenience of it; to satisfy those natural appetites, which importunately crave relief, and without intolerable pain cannot be denied it; to repel or decline whatever is very grievous and offensive to nature^c; the self-love that urgeth us to do these things is no more to be blamed than it can be shunned.

Reason farther alloweth such a self-love, which moveth us to the pursuance of any thing apparently good, pleasant, or useful to us, the which doth not contain in it any essential turpitude or iniquity; doth not obstruct the attainment of some true or greater good; doth not produce some overbalancing mischief; doth not infer harm to the world, or wrong to other men^d.

Reason dictateth and prescribeth to us, that we should have a sober regard to our true good and welfare; to our best interest and solid content; to that, which (all things being rightly stated, considered, and computed) will in the final event prove most beneficial and satisfactory to us: a self-love working in prosecution of such things common sense cannot but allow and approve^e.

^c Panis crumena, olus, vini sextarius; adde

Quicquid humana sibi delectat natura negatis. Hor. Serm. i. 1.

^d Τὸν μὲν ἀγαθὸν διὸ φιλοῦσιν εἶναι· καὶ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τὰ καλὰ πράττειν, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀφιλόησιν· τὸν δὲ μαχθηρὸν ἐδιδῶ, βλάψαι γὰρ καὶ ταυτὸν καὶ τοὺς πύλας, φάβουσι παθεῖν ἰσχυμένους. Arist. Eth. ix. 8.

^e Ὡς γὰρ οὗτος αἰετῆται τὸ βέλτιστον ταυτῶν, ὃ ἂν ἐκτακτῇσι περὶ ταυτῶν. Ibid.

SERM. God himself hath to these suggestions of nature, and
LX. dictates of reason, adjoined his own suffrage, having in various ways declared it to be his will and pleasure, that we should tender our real and final good. He, as the author of nature, and fountain of reason, may be supposed to ordain that, unto which nature doth so potently incline, and which reason so clearly prescribeth. He plainly hath to every man committed himself in charge, so as to preserve his being from ruin, and to enjoy it with comfort. He by making so rich a provision for the sustenance of our lives, and satisfaction of our appetites, by framing our bodies to relish delight, and suiting so many accommodations in wondrous correspondence to our senses, hath sufficiently intimated it to be his pleasure, that we should in reasonable measure seek them and enjoy them; otherwise his care would have been vain, and his work useless; yea, he might seem to have laid an ill design to tempt and ensnare us: he certainly had no such intent; but as he made us out of goodness, as he made us capable of tasting comfort, as he hath furnished us with means of attaining it, so he meaneth that we should partake thereof.

Quia tutela
 certissima
 ex proximo
 est, sibi
 quisque
 commissus
 est. Sen.
 Ep. 121.

He also expressly hath commanded us to love all men, not excluding ourselves from the number; to love our neighbour, and therefore ourselves; who of all are nearest to ourselves; who occur as the first objects of humanity and charity; whose needs we most sensibly feel; whose good is in itself no less considerable than the single good of any other person; who must first look to our own good before we can be capable to love others, or do any good to our neighbour.

He therefore hath made the love of ourselves to be the rule and standard, the pattern, the argument of our love to others; imposing on us those great commands of *loving our neighbours as ourselves*, and *doing as we would be done unto*; which imply not only a necessity, but an obligation of loving ourselves.

He doth enforce obedience to all his commands, by

promising rewards, yielding immense profit and transcendent pleasure to us, and by threatening punishments grievous to our sense; which proceeding is grounded upon a supposition that we do and ought greatly to love ourselves, 36. SERM. LX.
 or to regard our own interest and pleasure. Matt. xvi.

He doth recommend wisdom or virtue to us, as most agreeable to self-love; most eligible, because it yieldeth great benefit to ourselves; because, as the Wise Man saith, *he that getteth it, doth love his own soul; he that keepeth it, shall find good.* Prov. xix. 8, 16. xi. 17.

Aristotle saith of a virtuous man, that he is the greatest self-lover; Δόξα δ' ἂν ὁ τοιοῦτος εἶναι μᾶλλον φίλαυτος· ἀπο- Eth. ix. 8.
 νέμα γὰρ ἑαυτῷ τὰ κάλλιστα, καὶ μάλιστα ἀγαθὰ, καὶ χαρίζεται ἑαυτῷ τῷ κυριωτάτῳ.

He dissuadeth from vice, as therefore detestable, because the embracing it doth imply hatred of ourselves, bringing mischief and damage to us; because, as the Wise Man doth express it, *he that sinneth, wrongeth his own soul; he that despiseth instruction, despiseth his own soul; he that committeth injury, hateth his own soul.* Prov. viii. 36. xv. 32. xxix. 24.

He commendeth his laws to our observance, by declaring them in their design and tendency chiefly to regard our good and advantage; made apt to preserve the safety and quiet, to promote the wealth and prosperity of our lives; to bring ease and comfort to our minds, grace and ornament to our names, salvation and happiness to our souls. Deut. x. 12. Mic. vi. 8. Neh. ix. 13. Prov. iii. iv. &c.

In fine, God chargeth and encourageth us to affect and pursue the highest goods whereof we are capable; most ample riches, most sublime honours, most sweet pleasures, most complete felicity; *He, saith St. Paul, will render to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life; to seek such things is the highest instance, is the surest argument of self-love that can be; he therefore who obligeth, who encourageth us thereto, doth plainly shew his approbation of a self-love.* Rom. ii. 7.

So it appeareth that all self-love is not culpable, but that some kind thereof is very commendable; how then

SERM. shall we distinguish; how shall we *sever*, to use the Prophet's language, *the precious from the vile*?

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Jer. xv. 19. To this we may answer in general, that all love of ourselves which is unreasonably grounded, or which is excessive in its degrees and limits; or which venteth itself in wrong instances; or which driveth our mind, will, and affections toward bad objects; or which produceth effects noxious to ourselves or others, is culpable. If we esteem ourselves for things not true or really for things indifferent or mean, for things nowise excellent or valuable; if we affect ourselves beyond compass, so as to postpone the love of God, or exclude the love of our neighbour; if out of regard to ourselves we do things base or mischievous; if thence we dote upon vain profits, embrace foul pleasures, incur sinful guilt, expose ourselves to grievous danger, trouble, remorse, and punishment; if thereby we are engaged to forsake our true interest, and forfeit our final happiness; then assuredly it is a foolish and vicious self-love; it is indeed not a proper, but a false and equivocal love, usurping that goodly name; it is a real hatred, or enmity, disguised under the semblance of friendship; it more properly may be called cruelty, treachery, flattery, mockery, delusion, and abuse of ourselves.

But for a more distinct and clear resolution of the case, we may do well to consider the proper acts of love, which do constitute it, or inseparably do adhere thereto; such as those: a good esteem of the person, which is the object of our love; an earnest good-will toward him, or desire of his good; a complacence in good, and dissatisfaction in evil arriving to him; a readiness to yield or procure good to him; a desire of union and enjoyment, that is, of intimate conversation and intercourse with him, a deference of regard to him, a compliance with his desires, and care to please him. Now if these acts toward ourselves are in their kind, in their grounds, in their measures conformable to reason, piety, and justice, then is our self-love innocent or worthy: if they are not so, it is criminal and vicious.

If we do rightly esteem ourselves, (both absolutely, and in comparison to others;) if we desire to ourselves what is fit and just; if we are pleased with true goods, and displeased at real evils incident to us; if we do in lawful ways endeavour to procure things truly convenient and beneficial to us; if we maintain a faithful and cheerful correspondence with ourselves; if we have a sober regard to ourselves, agreeable to our nature and state; if we comply with the dictates of our reason, and satisfy our desires conforming thereto; then do we love ourselves innocently, then are we true friends to ourselves.

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But if we overvalue ourselves; if we do wish to ourselves things incommodious or hurtful; if we are delighted or dissatisfied in false shews of good or evil befalling us; if we strive to acquire for ourselves things bad or mischievous; if our converse with ourselves is naughty or vain; if we make indecent applications to ourselves; if we stoop to our fond humours, or sooth our unreasonable desires; then is our self-love spurious, then are we indeed enemies to ourselves.

Farther, toward an exact discussion and trial of this case, we should do well, divesting ourselves of selfishness, to consider ourselves as other persons, or abstractedly as mere objects of those acts which love doth imply; for what rectitude or what obliquity there would be in them in regard to any object, the same would be in reference to ourselves. For instance,

If we should value any person justly according to his real worth, allowing a just rate to his virtue, to his parts, to his endowments, to his advantages of nature or fortune; not ascribing to him things which belong not to him, nor overprizing those he hath, not preferring him in any respect before those which are his superiors or equals therein; we shall herein do wisely and justly: but if (having our judgment anywise perverted) we do admire a person beyond his worth, and advance him above his rank; if we overlook his apparent defects and blemishes, or take them for excellencies, and yield them applause; what is this but folly and dotage, tempered with iniquity? and if

SERM. it be such in regard to another, it is no less such in respect to ourselves.

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If to any person we should wish things suitable, commodious, and advantageous, by obtaining which he, without any wrong or prejudice to others, might be considerably benefited, we shall herein act humanely, and like good friends; but if we desire things to him, which do not become or besit him, which will do him mischief, or which he cannot have without injury and damage to others, are we not herein notoriously unkind or unjust? The case is the same transferred to ourselves.

If we should observe any man by occurrences happening to him well improved in his condition, thriving in an honest way, prosperous in good undertakings, growing in worthy accomplishments of soul, to find satisfaction therein would be greatly laudable; and so it would be to condole, if we should see any man to fall into any grievous disaster or calamity; but should we behold a man (although in false appearance bettered, yet really) prejudiced and endamaged, (as when one is enriched by cozenage or rapine, is advanced by flattery or sycophantry, is famed for base or vain exploits, is immersed into care and trouble, is exposed to danger and temptation, is fallen into the enchantments of pleasure,) are we not, if we take pleasure therein, very silly, or very cruel? and if we should observe good physic administered to a sick neighbour, or that he is engaged in painful exercise for his health, should it not be absurd for us to be sorry thereat? For the same reasons we are blameable if we do rejoice when that we prosper in bad courses, or enjoy sinful pleasures, or fall into dangerous temptations; if we distaste the wholesome physic of adversity dispensed by Providence, or dislike the needful exercises of duty by God prescribed to us.

If we do yield our advice and aid to our neighbour, in furtherance of any design which is honest and beneficial to him, we then unquestionably do well; but if we do abet or encourage him in unjust or mischievous enterprises; if we render ourselves panders to his unlawful desires, factors for his unjust profits, complices of his

wicked practices, advocates of his sins; is this true love, is this faithful friendship? No surely; nor is it such toward ourselves, when we employ our faculties in contrivance or achievement of any unlawful designs, however satisfactory to our desires. SERM.
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If we should indifferently (without regard to the laws of piety, justice, humanity, or decency) espouse the interests of any person, so that for the promoting his designs, advancing his profit, gratifying his humour or pleasure, we should violate the commands of God, we should neglect the public good, we should work injury or mischief to our neighbour; would this dealing be allowable? Neither would it be so, if for our own sake, in regard to our private interest, we should thus behave ourselves.

2. If we do affect to hold free, sincere, cheerful, kind conversation with any person, for mutual instruction and comfort, this is sociable and friendly; but if we maintain frothy, foul, malicious, anywise pestilent discourse, apt to corrupt, or to annoy him, this is loathsome: and so it is, if we keep such intercourse with ourselves, harbouring vain, impure, unjust, uncharitable thoughts in our minds.

If we should defer regard to any man, answerable to his worth, we should thereby practise according to the good rules of humanity: but should we so affect or fancy any man that we should care for no man else, should pay no due respect, or perform any office of kindness elsewhere; should take no man's word, or mind any man's opinion beside, nor care to converse with any other; would this be love, would it not be ridiculous fondness? It is no less, if in regard to ourselves we are so morose, surly, or neglectful.

If we should comply with any man's reasonable desire, this were fair and courteous; if we should confide in the probable assistance of any person, this were modest prudence: but if we should entirely conform our practice to the will or humour of another, against the dictates of our own reason, and to the harm of ourselves or others; would this be love, would it not rather be vile and pitiful slavery? If we should without any ground, yea against

SERM. plain reason, rely upon the help or direction of another, would this be love, would it not rather be wild presumption? The same therefore it must be in us, if we in like manner are devoted to our own will, or confident in our own ability.

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If we should commend any man for good qualities or good deeds, this is honest; if we should encourage him in good undertakings, this is charitable; but to applaud his defects, to bolster him in ill practice, this is flattery and treachery; and in so doing toward others, we are not friends to ourselves, but traitors and parasites.

By such reflections and comparisons we may, I think, competently understand the nature of that bastard self-love, which is so vicious in itself, and productive of so many vices: but more fully to display, and withal to dissuade us from this vice, I shall particularly insist upon the common sorts thereof, shewing the peculiar unreasonableness of each, and the mischiefs consequent from it. They are indeed usually combined and complicated in practice, and have much affinity both in their nature and fruit; but I shall, as well as I can, abstract them one from the other, and so treat on them distinctly; they are these: *Self-Conceit*, *Self-Confidence*, *Self-Complacency*, *Self-Will*, *Self-Interest*. These I shall handle in the following discourses.

SERMON LXI.

OF SELF-CONCEIT.

2 TIM. iii. 2.

For men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

I. THE first and most radical kind of vicious self-love is **SERM.**
self-conceitedness; that which St. Paul calleth τὸ ὑπερβολῆς, to overween, or to think highly of one's self, beyond **LXI.**
what he ought to think. This doth consist in several acts
or instances.

Sometimes we in our imagination assume to ourselves perfections not belonging to us, in kind or in degree; we take ourselves to be other men than we are; to be wise, to be good, to be happy, when we are not so; at least to be far wiser, better, and happier than we are. The pleasure naturally springing from a good opinion of ourselves doth often so blind our eyes and pervert our judgment, that we see in us what is not there, or see it magnified and transformed into another shape than its own; any appearance doth suffice to produce such mistakes, and having once entertained them, we are unwilling to depose them; we cannot endure by severe reflection on ourselves to correct such pleasant errors; hence commonly we presume ourselves to be very considerable, very excellent, very extraordinary persons, when in truth we are very mean and worthless: so did St. Paul suppose when he said, *If a man think himself to be something, when he is Gal. vi. 2. nothing, he deceiveth himself*; such was the case of that

SERM. church in the Apocalypfe; *Thou fayeft I am rich, and*
LXI. *increafed in goods, and have need of nothing; and knoweft*

Rev. iii. 17. *not, that thou art wretched and miferable; they were like*
 men in a dream, or in a frenzy, who take themselves for
 great and wealthy perfons, when indeed they are in a
 forry and beggarly condition: into the like extravagancies
 of miftake we are all likely to fall, if we do not
 very carefully and impartially examine and ftudy our-
 felves.

Again; Sometimes we make vain judgments upon the
 things we do poffefs; prizing them much beyond their
 true worth and merit; confequently overvaluing ourfelves
 for them; the moft trivial and pitiful things (things which
 in themfelves have no worth, but are mere tools, and
 commonly ferve bad purpofes; things which do not ren-
 der our fouls anywife better, which do not breed any
 real content, which do not conduce to our welfare and
 happinefs) we value at a monftrous rate, as if they were
 the moft excellent and admirable things in the world.
 Have we wit? how witlefs are we in prizing it, or our-
 felves for it; although we employ it to no good end, not
 ferving God, not benefiting men, not furthering our own
 good, or anywife bettering our condition with it; al-
 though we no otherwife ufe it, than vainly to pleafe our-
 felves or others, that is, to act the part of fools or buffoons.
 Have we learning or knowledge? then are we rare perfons;
 not confidering that many a bad, many a wretched per-
 fon, hath had much more than we, who hath ufed it to the
 abufe of others, to the torment of himfelf; that hell may
 be full of learned fcribes and fubtile difputers, of eloquent
 orators and profound philofophers; who *when they knew*
God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful,
but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolifh heart
was darkened; not confidering alfo how very defective our
 knowledge is, how mixed with error and darknefs; how
 ufelefs and vain, yea how pernicious it is, if not fanktified
 by God's grace, and managed to his fervice. Have we
 riches? then are we brave men, as fine and glorious in
 our conceit as in our outward attire; although the verieft

Rom. i. 21.
Ardua res
hæc eft,
opibus non
tradere
mores.

Mart. xi. 6.

fools, the basest and most miserable of men, that go on the ground, do exceed us therein; although, as Aristotle saith, *Most either not use it, or abuse it*^a; although our wealth affordeth us no real benefit or comfort, but exposeth us to numberless snares, temptations, and mischiefs; although it hath no stability, but easily may be taken from us. Have we reputation? how doth that make us highly to repute ourselves in a slavish imitation of others! yet nothing is less substantial, nothing is less felt, nothing is so easily lost, nothing is more brittle and slippery than it; a bubble is not sooner broken, or a wave sunk, than is the opinion of men altered concerning us. Have we power? what doth more raise our minds! yet what is that commonly but a dangerous instrument of mischief to others, and of ruin to ourselves; at least an engagement to care and trouble? What but that did render Caligula, Nero, and Domitian so hurtful to others, so unhappy themselves? what but that hath filled the world with disasters, and turned all history into tragedy? Have we prosperous success in our affairs? then we boast and triumph in our hearts; not remembering what the Wise Man saith, *The prosperity of fools destroyeth them*; and that experience sheweth, prosperity doth usually either find or make us fools^b; that the wisest men (as Solomon) the best men (as Hezekiah), have been befooled by it: thus are we apt to overvalue our things, and ourselves for them.

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Prov. i. 32.

2 Chron.

xxxii. 25.

There is no way indeed wherein we do not thus impose upon ourselves, either assuming false, or misrating true advantages; the general ill consequences of which misdemeanour are, that our minds are stuffed with dreams and fantastic imaginations, instead of wise and sober thoughts; that we misbehave ourselves toward ourselves, treating ourselves like other men than we are, with unseemly regard; that we expect other men should have

^a Τῶν πολλῶν οἱ μὲν ἐ χρῶνται τῇ πλούτῃ διὰ μεγαλαυγίαν, οἱ δὲ παραχρῆνται δι' ἐκουσίαν. *Arist.* apud *Plut.* in *Pelop.*

^b Rarus enim ferme sensus communis in illa

Fortuna. *Juv. Sat.* 8.

SERM. LXI. like opinions, and yield answerable deferences to us; and are, if we find it otherwise, grievously offended; that we are apt to despise or disregard others, demeaning ourselves insolently and fastuously toward them; that we are apt to seek and undertake things, which we cannot attain or achieve; that we neglect the succours needful to help or comfort us, and the like: which will appear more plainly by considering the several objects or matters in which self-conceit is exercised; they are especially three: *intellectual endowments; moral qualities; advantages of body, fortune, and outward state.*

1 Cor. iii. 18.

Μωδὸς γινώσκου, ἢ αὐτῶν γινώσκουσιν. *Vid. Chrys. in Phil. Or. 7.*

I. We are apt to conceit highly of ourselves upon presumption of our *intellectual endowments* or capacities, whether *natural* (as wit, fancy, memory, judgment) or *acquired*, (as learning, skill, experience,) especially of that which is called *wisdom*, which in a manner comprehendeth the rest, and manageth them; whereby we rightly discern what is true, and what is fit to be done in any case proposed: this we are prone in great measure to arrogate, and much to pride ourselves therein. The world is full as it can hold of wise men, or of those who take themselves to be such; not only absolutely, but comparatively, in derogation and preference to all others: May it not be said to us as Job did to his friends, *No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you?* Do we not fancy ourselves incomparably wise, so that all our imaginations are deep and subtle, all our resolutions sound and safe; all our opinions irrefragably certain, all our sayings like so many oracles, or indubitable maxims? Do we not expect that every man's judgment should stoop to ours? do we not wonder that any man should presume to dissent from us? must any man's voice be heard when we speak? Do we not suppose that our authority doth add huge weight to our words? that it is unquestionably true because we say it? that it is presumption, it is temerity, it is rudeness hardly pardonable to contest our dictates? This is a common practice, and that which is

Οἷος κείνου-
ται τοὶ δι-
στὰς αὐτοῦ.

Prov. iii. 7.

Rom. xii. 16.

often prohibited and blamed in Scripture: *Be not wise in thine own eyes*, saith the Wise Man; and, *Be not wise in*

your own conceits, saith the Apostle ; and, I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think ; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

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Rom. xii. 3.

The great reasonableness of which precepts will appear by considering both the absurdity and the inconveniences of the practice which they forbid.

If we do reflect either upon the common nature of men, or upon our own constitution, we cannot but find our conceits of our wisdom very absurd : for how can we take ourselves for wise, if we observe the great blindness of our mind, and feebleness of human reason, by many palpable arguments discovering itself? if we mark how painful the search, and how difficult the comprehension is of any truth ; how hardly the most sagacious can descry any thing, how easily the most judicious mistake ; how the most learned everlastingly dispute, and the wisest irreconcilably clash about matters seeming most familiar and facile ; how often the most wary and steady do shift their opinions ; how the wiser a man is, and the more experience he gaineth, the less confident he is in his own judgment, and the more sensible he groweth of his weakness ; how dim the sight is of the most perspicacious, and how shallow the conceptions of the most profound ; how narrow is the horizon of our knowledge, and how immensely the region of our ignorance is distended ; how imperfectly and uncertainly we know those few things, to which our knowledge reacheth^c ; how answerably to such experience we are told in sacred Writ, that *every man is brutish in his knowledge* ; that *the Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity* ; that *vain man would be wise, though he be born like an ass's colt*, (that is, he is naturally wild and stupid ;) that *wisdom is hid from the eyes of all men, and is not found in the land of the living* ; that *the thoughts*

Jer. x. 14.

Psal. xciv.

11.

1 Cor. iii.

20.

Job xi. 12.

Job xxviii.

21, 12.

Wisd. ix,

14.

^c Quamcunque partem rerum humanarum divinarumque comprehenderis, ingenti copia quærendarum ac discendarum fatigaberis. *Sen. Ep.*
88.

SERM. *of mortal men are miserable, and our devices uncertain:*

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if we, I say, do consider such things, how can we but find it strange, that any man should admire his own wisdom, seeing that he thereby doth exempt himself from the common adjunct of his nature, and forgetteth himself to be a man?

If also a man particularly reflecteth on himself, the same practice must needs appear very foolish; for that every man thence may discover in himself peculiar impediments of wisdom; every man in his complexion and in his condition may find things apt to pervert his judgment, and obstruct his acquisition of true knowledge. Is his temper sanguine? thence becometh he quick, rash, credulous, confident and peremptory, slippery and fickle: is it phlegmatic? thence is he slow and heavy; diffident, pertinacious, and stiff in his conceits: his mind is either soft and limber, so as easily to receive the impressions of falsehood speciously represented; or hard and tough, so that he cannot readily admit instruction in truth, or correction of error. His wealth distracteth, or his poverty disturbeth his thoughts; prosperity swelleth his mind up into vain presumptions and satisfactions, or adversity sinketh it down into unreasonable despondencies and dislikes of things; plenty breedeth sloth, want createth trouble, indisposing him to think well; ease doth rust his parts, and business weareth them out; inclination, interest, company, prejudice, do forcibly sway his apprehensions; so that no man can get himself into, or keep himself steady in a perfect balance, requisite for exact judgment of things; no man therefore can obtain a degree of wisdom, whereof he may with any reason be conceited; the wisest men surely upon such experience have been little satisfied

Prov. iii. 2. with their share: *Surely, saith one, I am more brutish than any man, and I have not the understanding of a man;*

Psal. lxxiii. 22. and, *So foolish, said another, was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee:* this conceitedness therefore is very absurd, and an argument of notable ignorance and folly; neither is there perhaps any more plain instance or demonstration of general folly reigning among men than

this, that commonly we are so blind and stupid as not to discern and repent our own folly : *If any man*, saith St. Paul, *thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth not any thing yet as he ought to know* ; that is, if any man conceiteth himself to be considerably wise or intelligent, it is a plain sign that he is very ignorant, and understandeth little to any purpose. SERM. LXI.
1 Cor. viii.

So it is, if we consider ourselves singly ; and it is more so, in comparison to others ; for what ground can a man have of arrogating to himself a peculiarity of wisdom or judgment ? to deem himself extraordinary in that, to which there are no other than ordinary means of arriving ? to fancy himself wiser than any other, whenas (excluding accidental differences, that cannot be accounted for) all men have the same parts and faculties of soul, the same means and opportunities of improvement, the same right and liberty of judging about things ? Did not he, who *formeth the spirit of man within him*, put into every man that heavenly mark, whereby we discern and judge of things ? is not every man concerned in that saying of Elihu, *There is a spirit in men, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding* ? do not the fountains of knowledge (natural delight, divine revelation, human instruction, continual experience) stand open to all ; and are no less common to men, than is the air they breathe, and the sun which equally shineth on them all ? Is God, the donor of wisdom, partial in the distribution of it ? doth not that overture reach indifferently to all, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally,—and it shall be given him* ? may not others be as inquisitive, as industrious, as sincere as we in the search of truth ? why not then as successful in finding it ? Is there any private chink, through which light shineth only upon us, or truth may be espied ? is there any cunning by-path, in which we alone, with more expedition and security than others in the common roads, can travel on toward knowledge ? What patents have we to shew for a monopoly of reason ? what right have we to engross any knowledge ? who hath granted us a privilege of sure

SERM. judgment, or an exemption from error? how can we in

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trial of things claim more than a single vote? or why should our word have more weight than any other? may not any man with as much reason prefer his judgment before ours, as we before his? and if we blame him for it, do we not thereby condemn ourselves for doing the like? if we do know but the same things, or frame the same judgments with others, how can we be conceited of that which is promiscuous? if we pretend to abstruse notions, or hold forth paradoxes, how can that be ground of boasting, seeing the cause standeth contested by authority no less than our own, and that it is vain to triumph over the opinions of others before we have conquered them? why in such cases is it not reasonable to presume, that among the many dissenters from us, there are some who have as much sense as we, and who have weighed the matter with no less care, no less indifferency? In fine, may not any man with good cause propound to us that

Job xv. 8, 9. *expostulation in Job: Hast thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself? What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us?*

Such conceitedness therefore is very absurd; and it is no less hurtful; for many great inconveniences, many sad mischiefs spring from it, such as gave the Prophet cause

II. v. 21. *to denounce, Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own conceit: it hath many ways had influence on our souls, and on our lives; it is often our case, which was the case of Babylon, when the Pro-*

II. xlvii. 10. *phet said of it, Thy wisdom and thy knowledge hath perverted thee; for thou hast said in thy heart, I am, and none else beside me.*

Hæc est
hominis
vera sapi-
entia, im-
perfectum
esse nosse.
Hier. contra
Pelag. i. 5.
Prov. xx.
12.

It is a great bar to the getting wisdom, to the receiving instruction and right information about things; for he that taketh himself to be abundantly knowing, or incomparably wise, will not care to learn, will scorn to be taught; he thence becometh more incapable of wisdom than a mere idiot; so did Solomon observe, *Seest thou,* said he, *a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope*

of a fool than of him : of a fool that is sensible of his ignorance, there may be hope, that he may by instruction become wise; but he that taketh himself to want no instruction, or to be above learning, is in a desperate condition ^d.

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It rendereth men in doubtful or difficult cases unwilling to seek, and unapt to take advice; he will not care for or admit any counsellor but himself; hence he undertaketh and easily is deceived, and incurreth disappointment, damage, disasters in his affairs. As it is most incident to weak, inconsiderate, lazy persons, who have not a capacity, will not yield attention, or take pains to get right notions of things, so it doth smother all industry, consideration, and circumspection; for such persons think they need no labour in searching truth, no care in weighing arguments, no diligence in observing things; they can easily at first sight descry all, and penetrate to the bottom of things; they have at easy rates the pleasure of fancying themselves wise; why should they spend farther pains to dispossess themselves of that pleasure, or to introduce another less satisfactory? thus is the sluggard, as Prov. xxvi. 16. Solomon saith, *wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.*

It rendereth us very rash and precipitant in judging; for the first shews of things, or the most slender arguments, which offer themselves, being magnified, and aggravated from opinion concerning ourselves, do sway our judgment, and draw forth a sudden resolution from us; it must, we presently suppose, be very reasonable, because it seemeth reasonable to us.

Hence also we persist obstinate and incorrigible in error; for what reason can be efficacious to reclaim him whose opinion is the greater reason? what argument can be ponderous enough to outweigh his authority? how can he (the man of wisdom, the perspicacious and profound person) yield that he hath erred? how can he part

^d Puto multos potuisse ad sapientiam pervenire, nisi putassent se pervenisse.
Sen. de tranquillitate, an 1.

SERM. with the satisfaction of being always in the right, or endure the affront of being any time baffled ?

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It rendereth men peevish and morose, so as to bear nobody that dissenteth from them, nor to like any thing, which doth not hit their fancy ; to cross their opinion or humour, is to derogate from their wisdom ; and being in their apprehension so injured, they find cause to be angry.

It rendereth them insolent, and imperious in conversation, so as to dictate, and impose their conceits upon others. He that is conceited of his own wisdom, will imagine that upon that advantage he hath a right to prescribe, others an obligation to submit ; *eo ipso* he becometh a common master and judge ; and they are culpable, who will not yield him a credulous ear, who will not stand to his decision.

Hence also do men become so carping and censorious ; for if any man's words do not jump with their notions, if any man's actions be not conformable to their rules, they straightway rise up to condemn them of folly, of faultiness.

Yea hence men become intolerably pragmatical ; for they conceit themselves better to know another's concerns than he himself doth, and so will intrude his advice, will be angry if his advice be not followed.

To such inconveniences and iniquities this ill disposition exposeth us, and to many others ; for it is indeed that in effect, which the holy Scripture representeth as the source of all impious and wicked courses ; to which men betray themselves, while taking themselves to be wise, they do stiffly adhere to their own imaginations and devices, although contrary to the prescriptions of divine wisdom, to the dictates of common reason, to the admonitions of

Jer. xiii. 10.
vi. 19.

Isa. lxxv. 2.
liii. 6.

Deut. xxix.
19.

sober and good men : *We will*, say they in the Prophet, *walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart* : and, *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people ; which walketh in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts* : and, *If he blesteth himself, saying, I shall have peace, though I*

walk in the imagination of my heart: and, So I gave them **SERM.**
unto their own heart's lust, and they walked in their own **LXI.**
counsels. These are descriptions of bad men, implying self-
 conceit to be the root of their impiety.

2. Again, we are apt to conceit highly and vainly of
 our moral qualities and performances; taking ourselves
 for persons rarely good, perfect, and blameless; apprehend-
 ing no defects in our souls, or miscarriages in our lives,
 although indeed we are as full of blemishes, we are as
 guilty of faults as others; *There is, saith the Wise Man,*
a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not
washed from their filthiness; to this generation we belong,
 if we admire our virtues, if we justify our lives, if (as
 it is said of the Pharisee) *we trust in ourselves that we are*
righteous.

Pf. lxxxi.

12.

Prov. i. 30,

31.

Isa. lvi. 4.

Prov. xxx.

12.

Luke xviii.

9. xvi. 15.

x. 29.

This practice doth include great folly, and it produceth
 great mischiefs.

It is very foolish, and argueth the greatest ignorance
 that can be; for such is the imperfection, the impotency,
 the impurity of all men, even of the wisest and best men,
 (discernible to them who search their hearts and try their
 ways, strictly comparing them to the rules of duty, God's
 laws, and the dictates of reason,) that no man can have
 reason to be satisfied in himself or in his doings: every
 man looking into himself, shall find his mind so pestered
 with vain and filthy thoughts; his will so perverse, so
 froward, so weak, so unsteady; his desires so fond and un-
 warrantable; his passions so disorderly and ungovernable;
 his affections so misplaced, or at least so cold and dull
 in regard to their right objects; his resolutions toward
 good so weak and slack; his intentions so corrupt, or
 mixed with oblique regards; he that observeth his actions,
 shall in the best of them (as to the principles whence they
 rise, as to the ends they drive at, as to the manner of their
 performance) find so many great defailances, that he will
 see cause rather to abhor than to admire himself.

Who, let me ask, doth love God with all his soul, so as
 to place in him his total content and delight, so as to do
 all things out of love to him, with a regard to his honour

Hier. in

Lucif. cap.

6.

SERM. and service? so as to be willing and glad to part with all
LXI. things for his sake? who hath that constant and lively
 sense of God's benefits and mercies that he should have?
 who hath a perfect resignation of will to his pleasure, so
 as to be displeased with no event dispensed by his hand?
 who hath such a vigour of faith and confidence in him, as
 will support him in all wants, in all distresses, in all temp-
 tations, so as never to be disquieted or discouraged by
 them, so as to *cast on God* (as he is commanded) all the
cares of his soul and *burdens* of his life? who constantly
 maintaineth a fervour of spirit, a steadiness of resolution, a
 clear and calm frame of soul, an abstractedness of mind
 from worldly desires and delights? who continually is
 fervent and undistracted in his devotion? who with an
 unwearied and incessant diligence doth watch over his
 thoughts? who doth entirely command his passions, and
 bridle his appetites? who doth exactly govern his tongue?
 who is perpetually circumspect over his actions? who
 loveth his neighbour as himself, seeking his good, and de-
 lighting therein as in his own; being sorry for his adver-
 sities, as if they had befallen himself? who feelth that
 contrition of spirit, that shame, that remorse for his sins,
 or that detestation of them, which they deserve? who is
 duly sensible of his own unworthiness? Very few of us
 surely, if we examine our consciences, can answer, that we
 are they who perform these duties; and if not, where
 is any ground of self-conceit? how much cause rather is
 there of dejection, of displeasure, of despising and detesting
 ourselves!

The Dona-
 tists—re-
 missionem
 peccato-
 rum sic
 datis, quasi
 nullum
 habebatis
 ipsi pecca-
 tum, &c.
Op. lib. 2.
Prov. xx. 9.
Ecclef. vii.
 20.
Job ix. 20.
xv. 14. xxv.
 4. iv. 18. ix. 2. (*Psal.* cxliii. 2.)

There have indeed been sects of men (such as the Nova-
 tians and the Pelagians,) who have pretended to perfec-
 tion and purity; but these men, one would think, did
 never read the Scripture, did never consult experience, did
 never reflect on their minds, did never compare their prac-
 tice with their duty; had no conscience at all, or a very
 blind and stupid one. *Who can say, I have made my heart*
clean, I am pure from my sin? was a question of Solomon,
 to the which he thought no man could answer affirm-
 atively of himself: *If I justify myself, my own mouth shall*

condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall prove me perverse; was the asseveration of that person, whose virtue had undergone the severest trials: *In many things we offend all*, was the confession of an Apostle in the name of the wisest and best men. SERM. LXI.

Such men indeed (in contemplation of themselves and of their doings) have ever been ready to think meanly of themselves, to acknowledge and bewail their unworthiness, to disclaim all confidence in themselves, to avow their hope wholly to be reposed in the grace and mercy of God; (in his grace for ability to perform somewhat of their duty; in his mercy for pardon of their offences;) to confess themselves, with Jacob, *less than the least of God's mercies*; with David, that they are *worms, and no men*; with Job, that they are *vile, and unable to answer God*, calling them to account, *in one case of a thousand*; that they *abhor themselves, and repent in dust and ashes*; that *after they have done all, they are unprofitable servants*. And is he not very blind who doth see in himself those perfections which the greatest saints could not descry in themselves? is he not infinitely vain that fancieth himself more worthy than they did take themselves to be? Gen. xxxii. 10. Pf. xxii. 6. Job xl. 4. xlii. 6. ix. 2. Luke xvii. 10.

In fine, every man is in some kind and degree bad, sinful, vile; it is as natural for us to be so, as to be frail, to be sickly, to be mortal: there are some bad dispositions common to all, and which no man can put off without his flesh; there are some, to which every man (from his temper, inclination, and constitution of body or soul) is peculiarly subject, the which by no care and pain can be quite extirpated, but will afford during life perpetual matter of conflict and exercise to curb them: conceit therefore of our virtue is very foolish.

And it breedeth many great mischiefs.

Hence doth spring a great security, and carelessness of correcting our faults; for taking ourselves to be well, we see not any need of cure, thence seek none, nor admit any. Matt ix. 12. John ix. 41.

Yea, hence riseth a contempt of any means conducive to our amendment, such as good advice and wholesome re-

SERM.
LXI.

proof; to advise such an one is to accuse him wrongfully, to reprove him is to commit an outrage upon his presumed integrity of virtue. Hence also proceedeth a neglect of imploring the grace and mercy of God; for why should persons of so great strength crave succour? how should they beg pardon, who have so little sense of guilt? It is for a weak person to cry, Lord help me; it is for a Publican to pray, *God be merciful unto me a sinner.*

Luke xviii.
13.

It breedeth arrogance and presumption even in devotions, or addresses to God, inducing such persons in unseemly manner to justify themselves before God, to claim singular interest in him, to mind him, and as it were to upbraid him with their worthy deeds, to thank him for their imaginary excellencies; like the conceited Pharisee;

Luke xviii.
11.

God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers—I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I possess. They cannot demean themselves toward God as miserable sinners, who fancy themselves as admirable worthies, and gallants in virtue.

Also, a natural result thereof is a haughty contempt of others, venting itself in a supercilious and fastidious demeanour; so it was in the Pharisees, *who*, saith St. Luke, *trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.*

Luke xviii.
9.

Such persons, observing or suspecting defects and misbehaviours in others, but discerning none in themselves, do in their opinion advance themselves above their brethren, and accordingly are prone to behave themselves toward them: such men as they are the especially good men, the godly, the saints, the flower of mankind; the choice ones, the darlings of God, and favourites of Heaven, the special objects of divine love and care: others are impure and profane, rejectaneous and reprobate people, to whom God beareth no good-will or regard; hence proceedeth a contemptuous disregard or estrangedness toward other men; like that of those separatists in the Prophet, *who, notwithstanding they were a people provoking God to anger continually to his face, were yet, in conceit of their own special purity, ready to say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou:* whereas those

Is. lxx. 5.

who, soberly reflecting on their nature, their hearts, their ways, do frame a right judgment of themselves, can hardly esteem any man worse than themselves; they perceive themselves so frail, so defectuous, so culpable, as to find great reason for their compliance with those apostolical precepts; *In lowliness of mind, let each man esteem others better than himself; In honour prefer one another.* SERM. LXX.
Phil. ii. 3.
Rom. xii. 10.

This likewise disposeth men to expect more than ordinary regard from others; and they are much displeased, if they find it not in degree answerable to their conceit of themselves; taking them for silly, envious, or injurious persons, who forbear to yield it: such excellent persons must in all things be humoured, and cockered, otherwise you greatly wrong them.

Hence also such men easily become discontented and impatient; for if they be crossed in any thing, if any misfortune toucheth them, they take it very ill; supposing they deserve it not, but are worthy of better usage and fortune.

In fine, as this causeth a man to behave himself untowardly in respect to all others, (toward God and toward his neighbour,) so thence he most unbeseemingly carrieth himself toward himself; he is no faithful friend, no good companion to himself, but a fond minion, a vile flatterer, or a profane idolater of himself: for (like Narcissus) being transported with conceit of his own incomparable beauty or excellency, he maketh love to and courteth himself; finding delight in such conceit, he by all means cherisheth it, glozing and *flattering himself* (as the Psalm hath it) *in his own eyes*; representing his qualities to his imagination in false shapes, he devoutly adoreth those idols of his brain. Farther, Psa. xxxvi.

3. Self-conceit is also frequently grounded upon other inferior advantages; upon gifts of nature, (as strength, activity, beauty;) upon gifts of fortune, (so called,) as birth, wealth, dignity, power, fame, success; upon these things men ordinarily much value themselves, and are strangely puffed up with vain opinion, taking themselves from them to be great and happy persons: but seeing (as we touched

SERM. before) these things are in themselves little valuable, (as

LXI. serving no great purpose, nor furthering our true happiness;) seeing they are not commendable, (as not depending on our free choice, but proceeding from nature or chance;) seeing they are not durable or certain, but easily may be severed from us; the vanity of self-conceit founded on them is very notorious, and I shall not insist more to declare it; I shall only recommend the Prophet's advice

Jer. ix. 23,
24. concerning such things: *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: that is, nothing within us or about us should elevate our minds, excepting the assurance that God doth govern the world, being ready to protect and succour us, to dispense mercy and justice to us; so that how weak and helpless soever in ourselves, yet, confiding in him, we shall never be overwhelmed by any wrong or misfortune.*

So much concerning Self-Conceit; the other parts of vicious Self-Love may be reserved to another occasion.

SERMON LXII.

OF SELF-CONFIDENCE, SELF-COMPLACENCE, SELF-WILL, AND SELF-INTEREST.

2 TIM. iii. 2.

For men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

OF SELF-CONFIDENCE.

II. **ANOTHER** like culpable kind of self-love is that of **SERM. LXII.**
self-confidence; when men beyond reason, and without regard unto God's providence, do rely upon themselves and their own abilities, imagining that, without God's direction and help, by the contrivances of their own wit and discretion, by the prevalency of their own strength and courage, by their industrious care, resolution, and activity, they can compass any design, they can attain any good, they can arrive to the utmost of their desires, and become sufficiently happy; not considering, that of God (*in whose* Dan. v. 23. *hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways; in whose* Job. xii. 10. *hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind*) all our being and all our ability do absolutely depend; that he manageth and turneth all things, dispensing success according to his pleasure; that no good thing can be performed without the supply and succour of his grace, nothing can be achieved without the concurrence of his providence; that, *the way of man is not in* Jer. x. 23. *himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;*

*Ὅτι γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἢ θεωροῦν μόνος δεῖται,

*ἢ γλῶσσαν ἢ ἢ ἄλλος ἢ ψυχὴν ἔχει,

Ὅθεν διαπνεύθεις ἀφθνεύει νοῦς. Soph. Antig.

SERM. LXII. *that the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord; that, although a man's*

heart deviseth his way, yet the Lord directeth his steps; that no king is saved by the multitude of an host, a mighty man is not delivered by much strength, a horse is a vain thing for safety; The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; that (as St. Paul, one abundantly furnished with abilities suiting his designs as any man can be, doth acknowledge) we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing, but our sufficiency is of God: these oracles of truth, and even dictates of reason, no less than principles of religion, they consider not, who confide in their own abilities, with which nature or fortune do seem to have furnished them.

This is that instance of self-love, which the Wise Man biddeth us to beware of: Trust, saith he, in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding; in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. This is that which he condemneth as foolish, and opposite to wise proceeding: He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool; but whoso walketh wisely shall be delivered.

This is that which smothereth devotion, and keepeth men from having recourse to God; while they think it needless to ask for that which they have in their power, or have means of obtaining; this consequently depriveth them of divine aid, which is afforded only to those who seek it, and confide therein.

This often engageth men to attempt things rashly, and causeth them to come off unhappily; God interposing to cross them, with purpose to cure their error, or confound their presumption.

From hence, if God ever suffereth their attempt to prosper, they sacrilegiously and profanely arrogate to themselves the success, sacrificing to their own net, and saying with him in the Prophet, By the strength of my hand have I done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent.

This causeth most men to fail of true content here, and of happiness finally; while taking them to be, where they are not, at home, within their own hand or reach, they

Prov. xvi. 1.

xvi. 9.

xix. 21.

xx. 24.

Psal. xxxiii.

16, 17.

Ecclef. ix.

11.

2 Cor. iii.

5. ii. 16.

Prov. xxviii.

26.

—æquum

inanimum

ipse parabo.

Habak. i.

16.

Isa. x. 13.

neglect to search after them abroad, there where they only **SERM.**
do lie, in the hand and disposal of God. **LXII.**

OF SELF-COMPLACENCE.

III. A like act of blameable self-love is *self-complacence*, that is, greatly delighting in one's self, or in the goods which he fancieth himself to enjoy, or in the works which he performeth; when men, in contemplation of their works and achievements, go strutting about, and saying with that vain prince, *Is not this great Babylon, that I have* Dan. iv. 30. *built?* when, reflecting on their possessions, they applaud and bless themselves, like the *rich man* in the Gospel, *Soul,* Luke xii. *(saith he, looking upon his accumulated store,) thou hast* ^{19.} *much goods laid up for many years.* Such vain soliloquies do men ordinarily make. Thou hast (saith a man to himself) rare endowments of soul; a wonderful skill and ability in this and that matter; thou art master of excellent things; thou hast managed very important business, hast accomplished hard designs, hast achieved brave feats, with great dexterity and admirable success, by thy wit and industry; thou hast framed and vented very curious orations, very facetious speeches, very nervous and pithy discourses; thou hast put obligations upon this man and that; thou hast got much credit and interest amongst men; the world much looketh on thee, loveth and prizeth thee hugely, resoundeth with thy fame and praise; surely thy worth is notable, thy deserts are egregious; how happy art thou in being such a person, in performing such things, in enjoying such advantages! Thus with a spurious and filthy pleasure do men reflect upon and revolve in their minds the goods they deem themselves to possess, and the favourable occurrences that seem to befall them; being fond of their own qualities and deeds as of their children, which, however they are in themselves, do always appear handsome and towards unto them; any little thing is great and eminent, any ordinary thing is rare, any indifferent thing is excellent to them, because it is theirs; out of any thing, how dry and insipid soever it is in itself, they suck a vain and foolish pleasure.

SERM. LXII. Hence is that honest and pure delight which they should taste in faith and love toward God, in the hope of future celestial things, in the enjoyment of spiritual blessings, in the conscience of virtuous practice, quite choked or greatly damped.

Hence also that hearty contrition and sober sadness, which, by reflection upon their great defects and frequent miscarriages, they should continually maintain in their souls, is utterly stifled.

Hence also that charitable complacency in the welfare, and condolency with the adversities of their brethren, is suppressed; hence cannot they be satisfied with any thing done by others, they cannot apprehend the worthy deserts, they cannot render due commendation to the good deeds of their neighbour; for while men are so pleased with their own imaginary felicities, they cannot well discern, they will not be duly affected with, the real advantages or disadvantages of themselves or of others.

OF SELF-WILL.

IV. Another culpable kind of self-love is *self-will*, (*αὐθάδεια*, pleasing one's self in his choice, and proceeding without or against reason;) when a man unaccountably or unreasonably, with obstinate resolution, pursueth any course offensive to others or prejudicial to himself, so that he will not hearken to any advice, nor yield to any consideration diverting him from his purpose, but putteth off all with a —*Stat pro ratione voluntas*: Say what you can, let what will come on it, I will do as I please, I will proceed in my own way; so I am resolved, so it shall be^b.

This is that generally which produceth in men the wilful commission of sin, although apparently contrary to their own interest and welfare, depriving them of the best goods, bringing on them most heavy mischiefs; this causeth them irreclaimably to persist in impenitence. Hence do they stop their ears against wholesome counsel; they

^b Περὶ δὲ αὐτῆς ἀπαξ τὴ ἐπιστολῇ, μνηστέρι με αὐτῆς πρὸς τὴν. *Nero apud Dion. Cass.*

Οἱ ἀμαθῆς ἐκχυρογρόμων. *Synes. Catv.*

Æt. Sen. Ep. 23. de Ben. 438. Arr. ii. 15.

harden their hearts against most pathetic and softening SERM. discourtes; they *withdraw their shoulder*; they *stiffen their* LXII. *neck* against all sober precepts, admonitions, and reproofs; Neh. ix. 28. they defeat all means and methods of correction; they will Jer. vii. 26. not hear God commanding, entreating, promising, threat- v. 3. ening, encouraging, chastising; they will not regard the Deut. xxxi. 27. advices and reprehensions of friends; the most apparent Prov. i. 25. consequences of damage, disgrace, pain, perdition, upon their ill courses will not stir them; their will is impregnable against the most powerful attempts to win and better them: let all the wisdom in the world solicit them, with a *Turn at my reproof*; it shall have occasion to complain, Prov. i. 23, 25, 29. *They would none of my counsel, they despised all my reproof.*

This is that also more particularly, which breedeth so much mischief to the public, which pestereth and disturbeth private conversation: this maketh conversation harsh, and friendship intolerable^c.

Hence are men in their demeanour so peevish and forward, so perverse and crossgrained, so stiff and stubborn; with much inconvenience to others, and commonly with more to themselves. Αὐθάδεια ἐνερμία ἔχουσιν. Plat. ad Dionetm, Ep. 4.

Hence will they not submit to the commands of their superiors, they will not comply with the customs of their country, they will not be complaisant in conversation; but everywhere raise factious oppositions, kindle fierce contentions, maintain disorderly singularities: they care not how for enjoying their humour they break the peace of the world, they disturb the order of things, they create tumults and troubles in any society, they bring vexations and mischiefs on others, on themselves. They do not consider or value the great harm they bring upon the public, nor how much themselves do suffer by it; so they have their will, what if the state be plunged into confusion and trouble; what if their neighbours be sorely incommoded; what if themselves lose their ease and pleasure?

It must be just as they will have it; what if ten to one

^c ——— τούτῃ δ' ἀνδρὶ μήτ' εἶην φίλος,
μήτε ξυνίην, ὅστις αὐτάρκη φρονεῖν
πίπτει, δούλους τοὺς φίλους ἡγούμενος. Eurip.

SERM. think otherwise; what if generally the wisest men are
LXII. agreed to the contrary; what if the most pressing necessity of affairs do not admit it; what if public authority (those whom all equity doth constitute judges, and to whom God himself hath committed the arbitration thereof) do not allow it; yet so it must be, because they fancy it, otherwise they will not be quiet: so do they sacrifice the greatest benefits of society (public order and peace, mutual love and friendship, common safety and prosperity) to their private will and humour.

This is that which St. Paul so often did forbid in word, and discountenanced in practice: for the edification of others, to procure advantage to his endeavours, to shun offence, to preserve concord and amity, he waved pleasing his own desire and fancy, he complied with the conceits and humours even of those who were most ignorant and weak in judgment; he even subjected and *enslaved* himself

Röm. xv. 1, to the pleasure of others, directing us to do the like: *We*
 2, 3. *then, saith he, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves: let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification; for even Christ pleased not himself,* (he adjoineth the great example of our Lord to enforce his own.) Again; *Give none offence,* saith he, *even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved: Be ye (herein) followers of me, as I am of Christ:* and again, *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some: Though I be free from all men,* (that is, although I have no superior, that can command me, or oblige me in these matters,) *yét have I made myself servant to all, that I might gain the more.* What this excellent person was in this instance of managing ecclesiastical discipline, and promoting the Gospel, that, both in the same cases, and in the prosecution of all other designs, in all our conversation and practice, should we likewise be.

1 Cor. x. 33. xi. 1.
 1 Cor. ix. 22, 19.

We should in no case indulge our own humour or fancy, but ever look to the reason of the thing, and act accordingly, whatever it requireth.

We should never act without striving with competent application of mind to discern clearly some reason why we act; and from observing the dictates of that reason, no unaccountable cause should pervert us: blind will, headstrong inclination, impetuous passion, should never guide, or draw, or drive us to any thing; for this is not to act like a man, but as a beast, or rather worse than a beast; for beasts operate by a blind instinct indeed, but such as is planted in them by a superior wisdom, unerringly directing them to a pursuit of their true good: but man is left *in manu concilii sui*, is obliged (under fore penalties) not to follow blind inclinations or instinct; but to act with serious deliberation and choice, to observe explicit rules and resolutions of reason.

SERM.
LXII.

Wisd. i. 12.
Deut. xxxii
19.
1 Cor. x.
24.

OF SELF-INTEREST.

V. Another culpable sort of self-love is that of *self-interest*; when men inordinately or immoderately do covet and strive to procure for themselves these worldly goods, merely because profitable or pleasant to themselves, not considering or regarding the good of others, according to the rules of justice, of humanity, of Christian charity; when their affections, their cares, their endeavours do mainly tend to the advancement, advantage, or delight of themselves; they little caring what cometh on it, who loseth, who suffereth thereby.

vid. Chrys.
in 1 Cor.
Or. 25.

They look upon themselves as if they were all the world, and no man beside concerned therein, or considerable to them; that the good state of things is to be measured by their condition; that all is well, if they do prosper and thrive; all is ill, if they are disappointed in their desires and projects.

The good of no man, not of their brethren, not of their friends, not of their country, doth come with them under consideration; what scandals do arise, what disorders are committed, what mischiefs are caused, they matter not, if they get somewhat thereby: what if the Church or State be reproached, what if the neighbourhood be offended or disturbed, what if the world cry out and complain, if they

SERM. become richer by it, or have their passion gratified, or find
LXII. some pleasure in it?

This is the chief spring of injustice; for from hence it is, that oftentimes men regard not what courses they take, what means they use, (how unjust, how base soever they be,) toward the compassing their designs; hence they trample upon right, they violate all laws and rules of conscience, they falsify their trusts, they betray their friends, they supplant their neighbour, they flatter and colloque, they wind about and shuffle any way, they detract from the worth and virtue of any man, they forge and vent odious slanders, they commit any sort of wrong and outrage, they (without regard or remorse) do any thing, which seemeth to further their design.

This is the great source of uncharitableness; for from hence men affect no man otherwise than he seemeth able to serve their turn; the poor therefore is ever slighted and neglected by them as unserviceable; the rich only is minded and respected as capable to promote their ends; they become hardhearted toward others, not considering or commiserating their case; they will part with nothing from themselves to those who need their relief; they delight in nothing which doth not make for their advantage; all their shews of friendship and respect are mercenary, and mere trade; they do nothing *gratis*, or for love.

This is the great root of all the disorders and mischiefs in the world; this self-love prompteth men to those turbulent scramblings and scufflings, whereby good order is confounded; this engageth them to desert their stations, to transgress their bounds, to invade and encroach upon others with fraud and violence: did men with any conscientious moderation mind and pursue their own private interest, all those fierce animosities, those fiery contentions, those *bitter emulations*, those rancorous grudges, those calumnious supplantings, those perfidious cozenages, those outrageous violences, those factious confederacies, those seditious murmurings and tumultuous clamours, would vanish and cease; self-interest it is that gives life and nourishment to all such practices, the which embroil the

world in discord and disorder. It is not out of pure madness or wanton humour that commonly men engage themselves and others in those base and troublesome courses, but out of design to get by it; hope of gain to be raked out of public ruins and disorders is the principle that moveth them, the reward they propound to themselves for their pains in meddling, toward the promoting them; like those who set fire on the town, that they may get opportunity to rifle and pillage.

SERM.
LXII.
—nullum
furor egit
in arma.
Bella pe-
tunt mag-
na victi
mercede.—

He that taketh himself to be as but one man, (naturally like and equal to others,) conceiving that he ought to consider the interest and right of other men in the same rank with his own, that he in reason should be contented with that share which ariseth to him by fair means^d; who thence resolveth to be satisfied with his own lot, to abide quiet in his station, to yield the same deference and compliance to others which he can presume or pretend to receive from them; who desires only to enjoy the gifts of Providence and the fruits of his industry in a due subordination to the public peace and welfare; he will not easily strive or struggle for preferments, he will not foment emulations or factions for his advantage, he will never design to cozen or supplant, to detract or calumniate for advancement of his ends; he thence will not contribute to the mischiefs and troubles in the world.

Self-interest therefore is the great enemy to the commonweal; that which perverteth all right, which confoundeth all order, which spoileth all the convenience and comfort of society.

It is a practice indeed (this practice of pursuing self-interest so vehemently, so especially above all things), which is looked upon and cried up as a clear and certain point of wisdom; the only solid wisdom; in comparison whereto those precepts which prescribe the practice of strict justice, ingenuous humanity, free charity, are but pedantical tattles, or notions merely chimerical; so the world

^d Ut quisque maxime ad suum commodum refert quæcunque agit, ita minime est vir bonus; ut qui virtutem præmio metiantur, nullam virtutem nisi malitiam putant, &c. *Cic. de Leg. 1.*

SERM. now more than ever seemeth to judge, and accordingly
LXII. to act; and thence is the state of things visibly so bad and calamitous; thence so little honesty in dealings, thence so little settlement in affairs are discernible. But how false that judgment is will appear if the case be weighed in the balance of pure reason; and most foolish it will appear being scanned according to the principles of religion.

In reason is it not very absurd that any man should look upon himself as more than a single person; that he should prefer himself before another, to whom he is not in any respect superior; that he should advance his own concernment above the public benefit, which comprehendeth his good, and without which his good cannot subsist? Can any man rationally conceive that he can firmly thrive or persist in a quiet and sweet condition, when he graspeth to himself more than is due or fitting, when he provoketh against himself the emulation, the competition, the opposition, the hatred, and obloquy of all or of many other persons?

May not any man reasonably have the same apprehensions and inclinations as we may have? may not any man justly proceed in the same manner as we may do? will they not, seeing us mainly to affect our private interest, be induced, and in a manner forced, to do the like? Thence what end can there be of propping and scrambling for things? and in the confusion thence arising, what quiet, what content can we enjoy?

Again; Doth not nature, by implanting in our constitution a love of society and aversion from solitude, inclinations to pity and humanity, pleasant complacencies in obliging and doing courtesies to others, appetites of honour and good esteem from others, aptness to approve and like the practices of justice, of fidelity, of courtesy, of beneficence, capacities to yield succour and benefit to our brethren, dictate unto us, that our good is inseparably connected and complicated with the good of others, so that it cannot without its own impairing, subsist alone, or be severed from the good of others; no more than a

limb can without suffering and destruction be torn from **SERM.**
the whole ? **LXII.**

Is there not to all men in some measure, to some men in a higher degree, a generosity innate, most lovely and laudable to all ; which disposeth men with their own pain, hazard, and detriment to succour and relieve others in distress, to serve the public, and promote the benefit of society ; so that inordinately to regard private interest doth thwart the reason and wisdom of nature ?

The frame of our nature indeed speaketh, that we are not born for ourselves ; we shall find man, if we contemplate him, to be a nobler thing than to have been designed to serve himself ; or to satisfy his single pleasure ; his endowments are too excellent, his capacities too large St. Paul, Rom. ix. for so mean and narrow purposes^c. How pitiful a creature were man, if this were all he was made for ! how sorry a faculty were reason, if it served not to better uses ! he debaseth himself, he disgraceth his nature, who hath so low conceits, and pursueth so petty designs.

Nay, even a true regard to our own private good will engage us not inordinately to pursue self-interest ; it being much hugged will be smothered and destroyed.

As we are all born members of the world, as we are compacted into the commonwealth ; as we are incorporated into any society, as we partake in any conversation or company, so by mutual support, aid, defence, comfort, not only the common welfare first, but our particular benefit consequently doth subsist ; by hindering or prejudicing them, the public first, in consequence our particular doth suffer ; our thriving by the common prejudice will in the end turn to our own loss. As if one member sucketh too much nourishment to itself, and thence swell-eth into an exorbitant bulk, the whole thence incurreth disease, so coming to perish or languish ; whence consequently that irregular member will fall into a participation of ruin or decay : so it is in the state of human cor-

^c Nec sibi, sed toti natum se credere mundo.

— nulloque Catonis in actus

Subrepsit, partemque tulit sibi nata voluptas.

**SERM.
LXII.**

porations; he that in ways unnatural or unjust (for justice is that in human societies, which nature is in the rest of things) draweth unto himself the juice of profit or pleasure, so as thence to grow beyond his due size, doth thereby not only create distempers in the public body, but worketh mischief and pain to himself; he must not imagine to escape feeling somewhat of the inconvenience and misery which ariseth from public convulsions and disorders.

So doth reason plainly enough dictate; and religion with clearer evidence and greater advantage discovereth the same.

Its exprefs precepts are, that we should aim to love our neighbour as ourselves, and therefore should tender his interests as our own; that we should not in competition with the greater good of our neighbour regard our own lesser good; that we should not seek our own things, but concern ourselves in the good of others; that we should not consult our own ease and pleasure, but should contentedly bear the burdens of our brethren: *Look not every man to his own things, but every man also to the things of others; Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth; Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ; Charity seeketh not its own*: these are apostolical precepts and aphorisms; these are fundamental rules and maxims of our holy religion.

It chargeth us industriously to employ our pains, liberally to expend our goods, yea (in some cases) willingly to expose and devote our lives for the benefit of our brethren.

It recommendeth to us the examples of those who have underwent unspeakable pains, losses, disgraces, troubles, and inconveniences of all kinds, for the furthering the good of others; the examples of our Lord and of his Apostles, who never in any case regarded their own interests, but spent and sacrificed themselves to the public welfare of mankind.

It representeth us not only as brethren of one family, who should therefore kindly favour, assist, and grace one

another, but as members of one spiritual body, (*members one of another*,) compacted by the closest bands of common alliance, affection, and interest; whose good much consisteth in the good of each other; who should together rejoice, and condole with one another; who should care for one another's good as for our own; looking upon ourselves to gain by the advantage, to thrive in the prosperity, to be refreshed with the joy, to be graced with the honour, to be endamaged by the losses, to be afflicted with the crosses of our brethren; so that, *If*, as St. Paul saith, *one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.* ROM. xii. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 25. 15.

These which I have already handled are the principal kinds of vicious self-love; there are farther some special acts of kin to them, sprouting from the same stock; which I shall touch: such as *Vain-Glory, Arrogance, Talking of One's Self, Thinking about One's Self.* Of these I shall treat more briefly.

SERMON LXIII.

OF VAIN-GLORY, ARROGANCE, TALKING AND THINKING OF ONE'S SELF.

2 TIM. iii. 2.

For men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

OF VAIN-GLORY.

SERM. LXIII. **W**HEN a regard to the opinion or desire of the esteem of men is the main principle from which their actions do proceed, or the chief end which they propound to themselves, instead of conscience of duty, love and reverence of God, hope of the rewards promised, a sober regard to their true good, this is *vain-glory*. Such was the vain-glory of the Pharisees, who fasted, who prayed, who gave alms, who *did all their works that they might be seen of men*, and from them obtain the reward of estimation and applause: this is that which St. Paul forbiddeth; *Let nothing be done out of strife or vain-glory*.

Matt. vi.
Mc. xxi. 5.
Phil. ii. 3.

Psal. xlix.
6.

Demost.
1st orat.
Rom. i. 22.

When men affect and delight in praise from mean or indifferent things; as from secular dignity, power, wealth, strength, beauty, wit, learning, eloquence, wisdom, or craft: as, *There are many, saith the Psalmist, that boast themselves in the multitude of their riches*. Nebuchadnezzar was raised with the conceit of having built a palace for the glory of his majesty, Herod was puffed with applause for his oration, the Philosophers were vain in the esteem procured by their pretence to wisdom, the Pharisees were elevated with the praise accruing from external acts of piety, (fasting twice a week, making long

prayers, titthing mint and cumin;) all which things being in themselves of little worth, the affecting of praise from them is manifestly frivolous and vain. Honour should be affected only from true virtue and really good works. SERM. LXIII.
Rom. ii. 7.

Those who seek glory from evil things, (who *glory in their shame*;) from presumptuous transgression of God's law, (hectorly profaneness and debauchery,) from outrageous violence, from overreaching craft, or from any bad quality, are not only vain-glorious, but impudent.

When men affect praise immoderately, not being content with that measure of good reputation which naturally doth arise from a virtuous and blameless life.

As all other goods, so this should be affected moderately.

It is not worth industry, or a direct aim.

When they are unwilling to part with the esteem of men upon any account, but rather will desert their duty than endure disgrace, prizing the opinion of men before the favour and approbation of God; as it is said of those rulers, who *believed in our Lord, but because of the Pharisees did not confess him, that they might not be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the glory of men, rather than the glory that is of God;* and those to whom our Saviour said, *How can ye believe, who receive glory from one another, but do not seek the glory that is of God?* John xii.
43.
John v. 44.

When they pursue it irregularly, are cunning and politic to procure it, hunt for it in oblique ways, lay gins, traps, and baits for it; such are ostentation of things commendable, fair speeches, kind looks and gestures, devoid of sincerity, &c. Such ways ambitious and popular men do use.

This practice is upon many accounts vain and culpable, and it produceth great inconvenience. Τὸ ἐν τῷ
κατὰ δὲ
καὶ ἐν
ἐν τῷ
Ναζ., Ἐρ.
63.

1. It is vain, because unprofitable. Is it not a foolish thing for a man to affect that which little concerneth him to have, which having he is not considerably benefited? Such manifestly is the good opinion of men; how doth that reach us? Do we feel the commotions of their fancy? doth their breath blow us any good?

SERM. 2. It is vain, because uncertain. How easily are the
 LXIII. judgments of men altered! how fickle are their conceits!
 Qui dedit the wind of heaven is not more fleeting and variable than
 hoc hodie the wind of popular air. In a trice the case is turned
 idem. with them; they admire and scorn, they approve and
 condemn, they applaud and reproach, they court and per-
 secute the same person, as their fancy is casually moved,
 or as fortune doth favour a person. Histories are full of
 instances of persons who have been now the favourites of
 the people, presently the objects of their hatred and ob-
 loquy.

—Stultus
 honores
 Sæpe dat
 indignis.

3. It is vain, because unsatisfactory. How can a man
 be satisfied with the opinion of bad judges; who esteem
 a man without good grounds, commonly for things not
 deserving regard; who cannot discern those things which
 really deserve esteem, good principles and honest inten-
 tion? These only God can know, these only wise and good
 men can well guess at: it is therefore vain much to prize
 any judgment but that of God and of wise men, which
 are but few. *Praise becometh not the mouth of a fool.*

Falsus ho-
 nor juvat,
 &c.
 Quem nisi
 mendo-
 sum?

How also can a man rationally be pleased with the
 commendation of others, who is sensible of his so great
 defects, and conscious to himself of so many miscarriages?
 which considering, he should be ashamed to receive, he
 should in himself blush to own any praise.

4. It is vain, because fond. It is ugly and unseemly
 to men; they despise nothing more than acting out of
 this principle. It misbecometh a man to perform things
 for so pitiful a reward, or to look upon it as a valuable
 recompense for his performances, there being considera-
 tions so vastly greater to induce and encourage him; the
 satisfaction of conscience, the pleasing God, and procur-
 ing his favour; the obtaining eternal happiness.

5. It is vain, because unjust. If we seek glory to our-
 selves, we wrong God thereby, to whom the glory thereof
 is due. If there be in us any natural endowment con-
 siderable, (strength, beauty, wit,) it is from God, the author
 of our being and life: is there any supervenient or acqui-
 site perfection, (as skill, knowledge, wisdom;) it is from

God, who gave us the means and opportunities of getting it, who guided our proceeding and blessed our industry: is there any advantage of fortune belonging to us, (as dignity, power, wealth;) it is the gift of God, who dispenseth these things, who disposeth all things by his providence: is there any virtuous disposition in us, or any good work performed by us; it is the production of God, *who worketh in us to will and to do according to his good pleasure*: have we any good that we can call our own, that we have independently and absolutely made or purchased to ourselves; if not any, why do we assume to ourselves the glory of it, as if we were its makers or authors? it is St. Paul's exhortation; *Who made thee to differ? what hast thou, which thou didst not receive? and if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* Phil. ii. 13. 1 Cor. iv. 7. John iii. 27.

This is that which maketh this vice so odious to God, who is sensible of the injury done him, in robbing him of his due honour: how sensible he is he shewed in that great instance of smiting Herod with a miraculous vengeance; because he did not *give the glory to God*, but arrogated glory to himself, receiving with complacency the profane flatteries of the people. He hath said, *I will not give my glory to another.* Acts xii. 22.

6. It is vain, because mischievous. It corrupteth our mind with a lewd pleasure, which choketh the purer pleasures of a good conscience, spiritual joy and peace.

It incenseth God's displeasure, who cannot endure to see us act out of so mean and base a principle.

It depriveth us of the reward due to good works, performed out of pure conscience, and other genuine principles of piety. *Ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν* They have their reward. Matt. vi. 1.

7. It is vain, because unbeseeming us.

It is observable, that the word *הַלְלֵה* signifieth to praise or applaud, and also to infatuate or make mad.

Glory doth fit unhandsonely upon us, who are so weak and frail, who are so impure and sinful, who are so liable to reproach and blame: it is like purple on a beggar—a

SERM. panegyric upon a fly. When all is said that can be well
LXIII. of us, we are ridiculous, because a thousand times more
 Job xii. 17. might be said to our disparagement and disgrace. For
 Isa. xlv. 25. one good quality we have many bad, for one good deed
 Ecclef. vii. we have done numberless evil. The best things we have
 8. ii. 2. or do, yield greater matter of dispraise than commendation, being full of imperfection and blemish.

Absolutely so; comparatively much more; what are we in comparison to God; whose excellency if we consider, and our distance from his perfections, how can we admit commendation? how can we take any share of that which is wholly his due?

If we consider even the blessed angels and saints, and how far short we come of them; what can we say, but praise them who are so worthy, and abhor ourselves who are so vile?

Seeing there are such objects of praise, how can it be conferred on a mortal, vile, wretched creature?

OF ARROGANCE.

When a man (puffed up with conceit of his own abilities, or unmeasurably affecting himself) doth assume to himself that which doth not belong to him; (more than in reason and justice is his due in any kind, more honour, more power, more wisdom, &c.)

When he encroacheth on the rights, invadeth the liberties, intrudeth into the offices, intermeddleth with the businesses, imposeth on the judgments of others. When he will be advising, teaching, guiding, checking, controlling others, without their leave or liking.

When he will unduly be exercising judgment and censure upon the persons, qualities, and actions of his neighbour.

These are instances and arguments of vicious self-love. He that doth rightly understand and duly affect himself will contain himself within his own bounds, will mind his own affairs, will suffer every man undisturbedly to use his own right and liberty in judging and acting.

The effects of this practice are, dissensions, dissatisfac-

tions, grudges, &c. for men cannot endure such fond **SERM.**
and unjust usurpations upon their rights, their liberties, **LXIII.**
their reputations.

OF TALKING OF ONE'S SELF.

Περὶ αὐτολογία, *Talking about one's self* is an effect and manifest sign of immoderate self-love.

It may seem a very slender and particular matter, but is of great use to be considered and corrected.

To talk much of one's self, of his own qualities, of his concerns, of his actions, so as either downrightly to commend one's self, or obliquely to insinuate grounds of commendation; to catch at praise; or, however, to drive on our own designs and interests thereby.

It is an argument of self-love, proceeding from a fullness of thought concerning one's self, and a fond affection to one's own things; (*Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh*; assuredly we think much of that, and we like it greatly, concerning which we are prompt to discourse: the imaginations and affections discharge themselves at the mouth.) Matt. xii. 34.

This is a foolish and hurtful practice. For,

1. It is vain, and hath no effect. We thereby seek to recommend ourselves to the opinion of men; but we fail therein; for our words gain no belief. For no man is looked upon as a good judge or a faithful witness in his own case; a good judge and a faithful witness must be indifferent and disinterested; but every man is esteemed to be favourable, to be partial in his opinion concerning himself; to be apt to strain a point of truth and right in passing testimony or sentence upon himself: he therefore that speaketh of himself is not believed, his words have no good effect on the hearers: it is true what the Wise Man observeth; *Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find?* (but it is hard to find one who, in making report or passing judgment concerning himself, will be faithful and just.) *Καυχῶσθαι ἑαυτοῖς* Prov. xx. 3. 2 Cor. xii. 1.

2. Yea it usually hath a contrary effect, and destroyeth

SERM. that which it aimeth at. Self-commendation is so far
LXIII. from procuring a good opinion, that it breedeth an evil one.

Men have a prejudice against what is said, as proceeding from a suspected witness ; one who is biased by self-love
 2 Cor. x. 18. and bribed by self-interest to impose upon them. *Not he that commendeth himself is approved.*

2 Cor. x. 13. It is fastidious, as impertinent, insignificant, and insipid ;
 ἐχὶ τὰ ἑμὶ- spending time, and beating their ears to no purpose ; they
 τρε καυχῶ- take it for an injury to suppose them so weak as to be
 σόμεθα. moved by such words, or forced into a good conceit.

It is odious and invidious ; for all men do love themselves, no less than we ourselves ; and cannot endure to see those who affect to advance themselves and reign in our opinion.

It prompteth them to speak evil of us ; to search for faults to cool and check us.

It is therefore a preposterous and vain way to think of gaining credit and love : men thereby infallibly lose or depress themselves.

Of all words those which express ourselves and our things, *I* and *mine*, &c. are the least pleasing to men's ears.

It spoileth conversation ; for he that loveth to speak of himself doth least love to hear others speak of themselves, and so is not attentive.

If a man have worthy qualities and do good deeds, let them speak for him ; they will of themselves extort commendation ; his silence about them, his seeming to neglect them, will enhance their worth in the opinion of men. Prating about them, obtruding them upon men, will mar their credit ; inducing men to think them done not out of love to virtue, but for a vain-glorious design. Thus did Cicero, thus have many others blasted the glory of their
 γίγνηται ὁ
 φωνὴ καυχώ- virtuous deeds.
 μένος.

2 Cor. xii.
 11.
 2 Cor. xi.
 17.

3. Supposing you get the belief and the praise you aim at, to have complacence therein is bad or dangerous ; it is a fond satisfaction, it is a vicious pleasure ; it puffeth up, it befooleth.

4. It is against modesty. It argueth the man hath a **SERM.**
high opinion of himself: if he believe himself what he **LXIII.**
saith, he hath so; if not, why would he persuade others to
have it?

Modesty cannot without pain hear others speak of him,
nor can with any grace receive commendations; it is
therefore great impudence to speak of himself, and to seek
praise.

5. We may observe it to be a great temptation to speak
falsely. Men, when they affect commendation, will gladly
have it to the utmost; are loath to wrong themselves, or to
lose any thing; they will therefore at least speak to the
extreme bounds of what may be said in their own behalf;
and while they run upon the extreme borders of truth, it
is hard to stop their career, so as not to launch forth into
falsehood: it is hard to stand upon the brink, without
falling into the ditch.

It is therefore advisable in our discourse to leave our-
selves out as much as may be; never, if we can help it,
to say, *I, mine, &c.* never seeking, commonly shunning and
declining occasion to speak of ourselves: it will bring
much convenience and benefit to us.

Our discourse will not be offensive; we shall decline
envy and obloquy; we shall avoid being talked of; we
shall escape temptations of vanity; we shall better attend
to what others say, &c.

If we will be speaking of ourselves, it is allowable to
speak sincerely and unaffectedly concerning our infirmities
and faults; as St. Paul does of himself.

There are some cases wherein a man may commend
himself; as in his own defence, to maintain his authority,
to urge his example, &c. so doth St. Paul often. He
calleth it folly to boast, (because generally such it is,) yet
he doth it for those ends.

2 Cor. xii.

5. xi. 30.

Plut. *πῶς
εἰς τὰς
ἐκείνων
ἐκείνων.*

Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a **Prov. xxvii.**
stranger, and not thine own lips. 2.

THINKING OF OURSELVES.

Thinking of ourselves with glee and pleasure; this is a

SERM. great nourisher of immoderate self-love; for the more they
LXIII. indulge to a gazing upon themselves with delight, the
 more they grow in love, the more passionately they come
 to dote on themselves.

It is good to reflect inward, and to view our souls; but we should do it so as to find a wholesome displeasure and regret in beholding ourselves so foul and impure, so weak and defectuous, so ugly and deformed: if we do thus, we shall not over-love ourselves.

Some general Remedies of Self-Love.

1. To reflect upon ourselves seriously and impartially, considering our natural nothingness, meanness, baseness, imperfection, infirmity, unworthiness; the meanness and imperfection of our nature, the defects and deformities of our souls, the failings and misdemeanours of our lives. He that doeth this cannot surely find himself lovely, and must therefore take it for very absurd to dote on himself. He will rather be induced to dislike, despise, abhor, and loathe himself.

2. To consider the loveliness of other beings superior to us; comparing them with ourselves, and observing how very far in excellency, worth, and beauty they transcend us; which if we do, we must appear no fit objects of love, we must be checked in our dotage, and diverted from this fond affection to ourselves. It cannot but dazzle our eyes and dull our affections to ourselves.

If we view the qualities and examples of other men, who in worth, in wisdom, in virtue, and piety, do far excel us; their noble endowments, their heroic achievements; what they have done and suffered in obedience to God, (their strict temperance and austerity, their laborious industry, their self-denial, their patience, &c.) how can we but in comparison despise and loathe ourselves?

If we consider the blessed angels and saints in glory and bliss; their purity, their humility, their obedience; how can we think of ourselves without contempt and abhorrence?

Especially if we contemplate the perfection, the purity,

the majesty of God ; how must this infinitely debase us in **SERM.**
our opinion concerning ourselves, and consequently di- **LXIII.**
minish our fond affection toward things so vile and un-
worthy ?

3. To study the acquisition and improvement of charity toward God and our neighbour. This will employ and transfer our affections ; these drawing our souls outward, and settling them upon other objects, will abolish or abate the perverse love toward ourselves.

4. To consider, that we do owe all we are and have to the free bounty and grace of God : hence we shall see that nothing of esteem or affection is due to ourselves ; but all to him, who is the fountain and author of all our good.

5. To direct our minds wholly toward those things which rational self-love requireth us to regard and seek : to concern ourselves in getting virtue, in performing our duty, in promoting our salvation, and arriving to happiness ; this will divert us from vanity : a sober self-love will stifle the other fond self-love.

S E R M O N LXIV.

PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT OF ALL MEN.

ROM. xii. 17.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

SERM. LXIV. **T**HE world apparently is come to that pass, that men commonly are afraid or ashamed of religious practice, hardly daring to own their Maker by a conscientious observance of his laws. While profaneness and wickedness are grown outrageously bold, so that many *declare their sin as Sodom*; piety and virtue are become pitifully bashful, so that how few have the heart and the face openly to maintain a due regard to them? Men in nothing appear so reserved and shy as in avowing their conscience, in discovering a sense of their duty, in expressing any fear of God, any love of goodness, any concern for their own soul. It is wisdom, as they conceive, to compound with God, and to collude with the world; reserving for God some place in their heart, or yielding unto him some private acknowledgment; while in their public demeanour they conform to the world, in commission of sin, or neglect of their duty; supposing that God may be satisfied with the invisible part of his service, while men are gratified by visible compliance with their ungracious humours.

Such proceeding is built on divers very fallacious, absurd, and inconsistent grounds or pretences; whereby men

egregiously do abuse themselves and would impose on others; namely these, and the like : SERM.
LXIV.

They would not, by a fair show and semblance of piety, give cause to be taken for hypocrites; whereas, by dissembling their conscience, and seeming to *have no fear of God before their eyes*, they incur an hypocrisy no less criminal in nature, but far more dangerous in consequence, than is that which they pretend to decline.

They would not be apprehended vain-glorious for affecting to serve God in the view of men; whereas often at the bottom of their demeanour a most wretched and worse than Pharisaical vain-glory doth lie; they forbearing the performance of their duty merely to shun the censure or to gain the respect of the vilest and vainest persons.

They would be deemed exceedingly honest and sincere, because forsooth all their piety is cordial, pure, and void of sinister regards to popular esteem; whereas partial integrity is gross nonsense; whereas no pretence can be more vain, than that we hold a faithful friendship or hearty respect for God, whom we openly disclaim or disregard; whereas also it is easily discernible, that although their piety is not, yet their impiety is popular, and affected to ingratiate with men.

They would be taken for men of brave, courageous, and masculine spirits, exalted above the weaknesses of superstition and scrupulosity; whereas indeed, out of the basest cowardice, and a dread to offend sorry people, they have not a heart to act according to their duty, their judgment, their best interest.

They would seem very modest in concealing their virtue; while yet they are most impudent in disclosing their want of conscience; while they are so presumptuous toward God, as *to provoke him to his face* by their disobedience; Isa. lxx. 8. while they are not ashamed to wrong and scandalize their Jer. vi. 17. brethren by their ill behaviour. viii. 12.

They would not be uncivil or discourteous in thwarting the mind and pleasure of their company; as if in the mean time they might be most rude toward God in

SERM. affronting his will and authority; as if any rule of civility
 LXIV. could oblige a man to forfeit his salvation; as if it were
 not rather most cruel discourtesy and barbarous inhumanity to countenance or encourage any man in courses tending to his ruin.

They would not be singular and uncouth, in discomfiting from the common road or fashion of men; as if it were better to leave the common duty than the common faults of men; as if wisdom and virtue were ever the most vulgar things; as if the way to heaven were the broadest and the most beaten way; as if rarity should abate the price of good things; as if conspiracy in rebellion against God might justify or excuse the fact; as if it were advisable to march to hell in a troop, or comfortable to lie there for ever among the damned crew of associates in wickedness.

They cannot endure to be accounted zealots or bigots in religion; as if a man could love or fear God too much; or be over-faithful and careful in serving him; as if to be most earnest and solicitous (not in promoting our own fancies, but) in discharging our plain duties could be justly reproachable, or were not indeed highly commendable.

These things I may hereafter fully declare; in the mean time it is manifest that such a practice is extremely prejudicial to religion and goodness; so that it may be very useful to employ our meditations upon this text of the Apostle, which directly doth oppose and prohibit it.

The same text he elsewhere (in his second Epistle to the Corinthians) doth repeat in the same terms, (only inserting a clause more fully explaining his sense,) backing his precept with his own example; for We, saith he there, did so manage the business of collecting and dispensing alms, as to avoid that any man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us; providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of men.

2 Cor. viii.
20, 21.

The words do imply a precept of very large extent, and touching a great part of our duty; even all thereof which

is public and visible; for which we are accountable to the world, whereof man can take any cognizance; which concerneth all our speech and conversation, all our dealing and commerce, all our deportment relating to human society, civil or spiritual. SERM. LXIV.

I shall first a little consider its meaning and design; then I shall propose reasons and inducements to its observance; then I shall declare the folly of those principles and pretences which obstruct that observance.

I. The meaning of it is, that we should have a special care of our external demeanour and conversation, which cometh under the view and observation of men; that it be exempted from any offence or blame; yea, that it be comely and commendable. "Αμύμων.
Phil. ii. 15.
"Ανέγκλητος.
Col. i. 22.

The terms in which it is expressed are notably emphatical; we are directed *προνοῦν, to provide*, to use a providence and forecast in the case: ere we undertake any design, we should deliberate with ourselves, and consider on what theatre we shall act, what persons will be spectators, what conceits our practice may raise in them, and what influence probably it will have on them. We should not rush on into the public view with a precipitant rashness, or blind negligence, or contemptuous disregard, not caring who standeth in our way, who marketh what we do, what consequence our proceeding may have on the score of its being public and visible: we should advise beforehand, lay our business, and on set purpose order our behaviour with a regard to those to whose sight and notice we expose it, foreseeing how our actions may affect or incline them. So we must provide; what things? καλὰ, things fair and handsome; things not only good, innocent, and inoffensive to the sight of men; but goodly, pleasant, and acceptable to well-disposed beholders; such as our Apostle doth elsewhere recommend, when he chargeth us to regard, ὅσα σεμνὰ, *whatever things are venerable*, ὅσα προσφιλῆ, *whatever things are lovely*, ὅσα εὖφημα, *whatever things are of good report*, ἃ τις ἔπαινος, *whatever things are laudable*; and when he doth exhort us to walk εὐσεβῶς καὶ καλῶς, *honestly and decently*, in a comely garb and fashion of life: this Rom. xiii. 13.
1 Theff. iv. 12.

SERM. may add an obligation to some things not directly pre-
LXIV. scribed by God, which yet may serve to adorn religion,
 but it cannot detract any thing from what God hath com-
 manded; it doth comprehend all instances of piety and
 virtue practicable before men; it certainly doth exclude
 all commiſſion of ſin, and omiſſion of duty; for that
 nothing can be fair or handsome which is ugly in God's
 fight, which doth not ſuit to his holy will.

Such things we muſt provide, *ἐνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων*,
before all men; not only before ſome men, to whom we
 bear a particular reſpect, of whom we ſtand in awe, upon
 whom we have a deſign; but univerſally before all men,
 as having a due conſideration of all thoſe upon whom our
 deportment may have influence; not deſpiſing or diſre-
 garding the obſervation of the meanest or moſt inconfider-
 able perſon whatever.

But in this practice, to avoid miſapprehenſions, we muſt
 diſtinguiſh; for it is not required that we ſhould do all
 things openly, nor intended that we ſhould do any thing
 vainly; but that we ſhould act conſtantly according to the
 nature and reaſon of things, with upright and pure inten-
 tion: the Apoſtle doth not mean that in our practice we
 ſhould reſemble the Pharifees, whom our Lord reproveth
 for *doing their alms before men*, for loving to pray *ſtanding*
 in the ſynagogues, for *doing all their works to be ſeen of*
 men; performing thoſe acts of piety openly *in the corners*
of the ſtreet, which ſhould have been done ſecretly *in the*
cloſet; and ſo doing them out of vanity and ambitious
 deſign, to procure the good opinion and praiſe of men: he
 doth not intend that we ſhould aſſume a formal garb of
 ſingular virtue; that we ſhould aim to ſeem better than
 we are, counterfeiting any point of religion or virtue;
 that we ſhould affect to appear even as good as we are,
 expoſing all our piety to common view; that we ſhould
 ſound a trumpet before us, making an oſtentation of any
 good deeds, catching at reputation or applauſe for them;
 that we ſhould do any commendable thing chiefly to ob-
 tain the good opinion of the world, or to eſcape its cenſure;
 infinitely far it was from the Apoſtle's intention, that we

Matt. vi.

1, 5.

Matt. xxiii.

5.

Matt. vi. 2.

should be like those whited sepulchres, which appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness; that is, like those Pharisees, who did outwardly appear righteous, but within were full of hypocrisy and iniquity: No;

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Matt. xxiii.
27, 28.

In some cases we must be reserved, and keep our virtue close to ourselves; and ever under a fair show there must be a real substance of good, together with an honest intention of heart; a good conscience must always lie at the bottom of a good conversation; the outside must be good, but the best side must be inward; we must endeavour to sanctify our life and conversation, but we must especially labour to purify our hearts and affections.

Τὸ εἶναι ἀ-
πλῆρες—
Τὸ εὐφραίνει
ἀψοφῆσι.
Ant. i. §. 9.
2. §. 5.

Join the precept with others duly limiting it, and it doth import, that with pure sincerity and unaffected simplicity (void of any sinister or fardid design) we should in all places, upon all occasions, in all matters, carefully discharge that part of our duty which is public, according to its nature, season, and exigency, that is, publicly; not abstaining from the practice of those good deeds, which cannot otherwise than openly be well performed; or the conspicuous performance whereof is absolutely needful in regard to God's law and the satisfaction of our conscience, is plainly serviceable to the glory of God, is very conducive to the edification of our neighbour, or which may be useful to good purposes concurrent with those principal ends: we should as good trees from a deep root of true piety, in due season naturally, as it were, shoot forth good fruits, not only pleasant to the sight, but savoury to the taste, and wholesome for use; as St. Paul, who, as he saith of himself, that he did provide things honest in the sight of all men, so he also doth affirm, that his rejoicing was this, the testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity—he had his conversation in the world.

Matt. vii.
17.
Luke vi. 44.
Psal. i. 3.
2 Cor. viii.
21.
2 Cor. i. 12.

There are indeed some duties, or works of piety and virtue, the nature whereof directeth, that in the practice of them we should be reserved; such as those wherein the world is not immediately concerned, and which may with best advantage be transacted between God and our own

SERM. LXIV. souls; as private devotion, meditation on God's word and will, the discussion of our consciences, voluntary exercises of penitence, and the like: such also be those wherein the intervention or notice of few persons is required; as deeds of particular charity in dispensing alms, good advice, friendly reproof; the which sort of duties our Lord hath taught us to perform *in secret*, or as closely as we may; studiously keeping our observance of them from the eyes of men; thereby assuring our sincerity to ourselves, and guarding our practice from any taint of vanity or suspicion of hypocrisy; as also in some cases avoiding to cause prejudice or offence to our neighbours: *Take heed*, saith our Lord, *that ye do not your alms before men*; and, *Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet*; and, *Thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast*; and, *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone*.

But there are divers other duties, the discharge whereof necessarily is notorious and visible; the public being the stage on which they are to be acted; the transaction of them demanding the intercourse of many persons, who are the objects or instruments of them, or are somewise concerned in them: such is that negative duty, of a general nature and vast comprehension, which we may call innocence; that is, a total abstinence from sin, or forbearance to transgress any divine command; which is a part of Job's character, *That man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil*: the which duty, being to be practised at all times in every place, cannot avoid being observable.

Such are also divers positive duties; for such is the profession of our faith in God, and acknowledgment of his heavenly truth, revealed in the Gospel of our blessed Saviour; which is styled *confessing our Lord before men*, and is, as St. Paul telleth us, indispensably requisite to salvation.

Such is joining in that public adoration, whereby the honour and authority of God are upheld in the world with

seemly expressions of reverence ; the which is to be performed solemnly, and, as the holy Psalmist speaketh, in the midst of the congregation.

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Psal. xcix.
5. cxxxii. 7.
xxii. 22.

Such is zeal in vindication of God's honour, when occasion requireth, from blasphemous aspersions, or from scandalous offences against it.

Such are justice, equity, fidelity, and ingenuity in our dealings ; meekness, gentleness, patience, kindness, and courtesy in our converse ; peaceableness in our carriage, and charitable beneficence ; the objects whereof are most general, according to those apostolical precepts, *That our moderation* (or our equity and ingenuity) *be known unto all men ; that we shew all meekness to all men ; that we must not strive, but be gentle unto all men ; that we be patient toward all men ; that we pursue peace with all men ; that as we have opportunity, we should do good unto all men ; should abound in love one towards another, and towards all men ; should ever follow that which is good, both among ourselves and to all men ; should liberally distribute to the saints and to all men : in performing which so general duties, how can a man pass incognito, how can he so deal with all men indiscernibly ?*

Phil. iv. 5.
Tit. iii. 2.
2 Tim. ii. 24.
1 Theff. v. 14.
Heb. xii. 14.
Rom. xii. 18.
Gal. vi. 10.
1 Theff. iii. 12.
1 Theff. v. 13.
2 Cor. ix. 13.

Such are likewise gravity and modesty in our behaviour ; sweetness, soberness, aptness to profit and edify the hearers in our discourse ; moderation and temperance in our corporeal enjoyments ; industry in our business and the works of our calling ; integrity in the management of any office or trust committed to us ; a constant practice of which virtues is not only enjoined to us as our particular duty, but for public example.

2 Tim. iv. 12.
Tit. ii. 4, 7.

Such are seasonable defence of the truth, and opposing of error ; the commendation of virtue, and reprehension of notorious sin, with the like.

Such things must be practised, because indispensable duties ; but they cannot be done out of sight, or barring the observation of men ; they do involve publicness ; they carry a light and lustre with them, attracting all eyes to regard them ; it is as impossible to conceal them as to hide the sun from all the world, or to conceal a city that is set

Matt. v. 14.

SERM. upon a hill; for nothing, as St. Chrysostom saith, doth ren-
LXIV. der a man so illustrious, although he ten thousand times
 would be hid, as an open practice of virtue^a.

Wherefore the works of mercy, saith St. Austin, the affection of charity, the sanctity of godliness, the incorruptness of chastity, the moderation of sobriety, these are perpetually to be held, whether we are in the public or at home; whether before men or in the closet, whether we speak or keep silence^b.

In the practice of them, it is true, we mainly should respect the approving our conscience to God, with expectation of our recompense from him; not being much concerned in the judgment or pleasure of men, purely considered in themselves; not aiming at any interest of credit or profit from them as a reward of our work^c; *We ought, as St. Austin saith, while we do good, to be seen, but we ought not to do it that we may be seen; the end of our joy, the bound of our comfort, should not be there; so that we should think ourselves to have obtained the whole fruit of a good work, when we have been seen and commended^d*: No, whatever we do, we should, as the Apostle directeth, do it as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; doing it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord we shall receive the reward of the inheritance.

Yet nothing in the mean time should hinder us from performing such necessary duties; strictly and exactly, with our most diligent care and endeavour, even in that light which their nature doth carry in it.

^a Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἵπταται ἰσχυρῶς ἀνδρὰ ποιῶν, καὶ μυρίαὶς λαοῦσιν βέλτεται, ὥς ἀγατὴς ἰπιδεῖται. *Chrys. in Matt. v. 16.*

^b Opera misericordiae, affectus charitatis, sanctitas pietatis, incorruptio castitatis, modestia sobrietatis, semper haec tenenda sunt; five cum in publico sumus, five cum in domo; five ante homines, five in cubiculo; five loquentes, five tacentes. *Aug. in Ep. 1. Joh. Tra8. 8.*

^c —non cum fama sed cum rerum natura deliberandum est. *Sen. Ep. 81.*

^d Si times spectatores non habebis imitatores; debes ergo videri, sed non ad hoc debes facere, ut videaris, non ibi debet esse finis gaudii tui, non ibi terminus lætitiæ tuæ, ut putes te totum fructum consecutum esse boni operis, cum visus fueris atque laudatus. *Ibid.*

How much soever of our virtue or piety out of humility **SERM.**
or modesty we may conceal, yet we must be careful of **LXIV.**
discovering any vice or irreligion, either by notoriously
committing any thing forbidden by God, or omitting any
thing commanded by him.

This we should not do upon any terms, upon any pre-
tence whatever; no wicked fashion should engage us, no
bad example should inveigle us, no favour of men should
allure us, no terror should scare us thereto; we should not
out of fear, out of shame, out of complaisance, out of
affected prudence or politic design; out of deference to the
quality, dignity, or authority of any person; out of regard
to any man's desire or pleasure; we should not to decline
offence, envy, blame, reproach, ill treatment, or upon any
such account, comply in any sinful practice, wave any duty,
neglect any season of performing a good deed, whereby we
may glorify God, or edify our neighbour, or promote the
welfare of our own soul.

To such a practice, according to the intent of St. Paul's
injunction, we are obliged; and thereto we may be in-
duced by divers considerations, particularly by those
which we shall now propose.

1. We may consider that the public is the proper, Bona con-
scientia
prodire
vult et con-
spici, ipsas
nequitia
tenebras ti-
met. Sen.
Ep. 27.
natural, and due place of goodness; it should dwell in
the light, it should walk freely and boldly everywhere, it
should expose itself to open view, that it may receive from
rational creatures its due approbation, respect, and praise;
it by publicness is advanced, and the more it doth appear,
the more beautiful, the more pleasant, the more useful it
is; yielding the fairer lustre, the greater influence, the
better effects; thereby diffusing and propagating itself, be-
coming exemplary, instructive, and admonitive; drawing
lovers and admirers to it; exciting and encouraging men
to embrace it: wherefore it is very absurd that it should
sculk or sneak; it is a great damage to the public, that it
should retire from common notice.

On the other hand, it is proper for wickedness never to
appear or to shew its head in view; it should be confined Omne ma-
lum aut
timore aut
to darkness and solitude, under guard of its natural keepers,

SERM. shame and fear; it should be exterminated from all conversation among rational creatures, and banished to the infernal shades: publicness doth augment and aggravate it; the more it is seen, the more ugly, the more loathsome, the more noxious it is; its odious shape being disclosed, its noisome steams being dispersed, its pestilent effects being conveyed thereby.

pudore natura perfudit. Tert. Apol. cap. 1. Job. xxiv. 13—17.

Wherefore to smother virtue (that fair child of light) in privacy, and to vent sin (*the works of darkness*) openly, is quite to transplace things out of their natural situation and order; according to which we are taught by our Lord, that *he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest*; and by St. Paul, that *every one who doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd*: so indeed it is, and will be, where conscience retaineth its due sway and force; where a due respect and reverence are preserved for goodness.

Rom. xiii. 12. Eph. v. 11. John iii. 21. Eph. v. 13.

As that any good cometh from detection of sin is an accidental advantage; so that any mischief doth ever follow the manifestation of virtue is an unnatural abuse; the which may well be prevented: there can be no danger of acting any good most evidently, if we do withal act sincerely, having purified our hearts from dishonest intention and from ambitious vanity; the fear of which should not wholly drive virtue under the hatches and bring vice upon the stage. But,

2. We should consider, that we cannot really in any competent or tolerable measure be good men, without approving ourselves such in our conversation before men.

Whatever may be pretended, it commonly doth happen, and it ever is to be suspected, that the invisible piety which is not accompanied with visible conscientiousness is false, or is no piety at all; or that they who have little care and conscience to serve God publicly have much less to serve him privately; or that such as betray a scandalous negligence of their ways will hardly maintain a careful watch over their hearts; for the same causes (be it profane infidelity, or looseness of principles, or supine incogitancy,

or sloth, or stupidity) which dispose them to disregard God and his laws before the world, more effectually will incline them to neglect God and forget their duty by themselves, where beside their own conscience there is no witness, no judge, no censor to encourage or reproach them. But admit it possible, and put case, that sometimes the heart and conversation may not run parallel; that a man may better govern his interior thoughts and affections than he doth manage his exterior behaviour and actions; that a man secretly may cleave to God, although he seemeth openly to desert him; yet this will not suffice to constitute or denominate a man good; because much of goodness, as we have shewed, even the nobler half thereof, (that part whereby God is most glorified, and whereby the world is most benefited,) doth lie in open and visible practice: that virtue therefore must be very imperfect, that obedience must be very lame, which is deficient in so great a part.

As there can be no fair pretence to goodness, where so little thereof is conspicuous; so there can be no real integrity thereof, where so much of duty is wanting.

Our Lord hath taught us, that *every tree is known by its fruit*; and St. James saith, that *faith is shewed by works*; and so it is, that a man can hardly be good in any reasonable degree without appearing such. Impiety may, but piety cannot be quite concealed. As gold may be counterfeited, (for all is not gold that glistereth,) yet true gold always doth look like gold; so although bad men sometimes may seem good, yet good men also must seem such, appearing in their own native temper and lustre.

Goodness cannot be disguised in the shape of evil, because simplicity and innocence are essential ingredients of it; any mixture of notorious sin, any visible neglect of duty assuring (yea formally making) a want of it, or a real defect therein: it may be daubed with false aspersions, it may be dimmed by the breath of unjust and uncharitable censures; but wiping them off, its natural hue certainly will appear.

Wherefore if we would satisfy ourselves in our own con-

SERM. sciences, or justify ourselves to others, that we are truly
 LXIV. good, we must (without partiality, or distinguishing be-
 (Num. xv. tween public and private) like the holy Psalmist, *have re-
 39, 40.) spect unto all God's commandments*; we, like Zachary and
 Ps. cxix. 6. Elizabeth, must *walk in all the commandments and ordi-
 Luke i. 6. nances of the Lord blameless*; we must, like David, *accom-
 Πάντα πάντα τὰ θελή-
 ματά μου. plish all God's wills*; we must observe St. Paul's rule, *to
 Acts xiii. abstain, ἀπὸ παντὸς εἶδους πονηροῦ, from both every kind of
 22. evil, and every bad appearance*. But farther,
 1 Thess. v. 23.

3. A great care of our good behaviour before men is necessary in regard to Almighty God; whose just interest is preserved, whose due homage is payed, whose honour is promoted thereby; the same being greatly prejudiced and impaired by the contrary default.

It is a clear point of justice toward God, as to render all obedience to him, so particularly that which consisteth in an open acknowledgment and service of him; for as he made and doth preserve not only the heart, but the tongue, the members, the whole man, so all must concur in rendering their tribute of reverence and service to him.

Rom. 12. 1. The Apostle doth prescribe, that *whatever we do, we
 1 Cor. x. should do all to the glory of God*; and well he might, feeling
 21. that to glorify God is indeed to execute the main design of our creation, to apply our faculties to their best use, to achieve the most proper and most excellent work whereof we are capable; to do that which is the worthiest and happiest employment of angels, which all the company of heaven, with most ardent desire, with most zealous ambition, with restless endeavour, doth pursue; and this we cannot better, we cannot otherwise do, than by an apparent good conversation. For,

He that apparently in all his actions maketh conscience of obeying God's laws, thereby doth evidence his firm persuasion concerning the existence and providence of God; doth adhere to him against all adversaries of piety, and all temptations to rebellion; doth avow his sovereign majesty and authority; doth yield him due veneration and obedience; doth shew right apprehensions of him, and just affections towards him; implying that he doth most highly

esteem him, doth most heartily love him, doth chiefly SERM.
dread him, doth repose his trust and hope in him for all his LXIV.
happiness; hath a great opinion of his wisdom, a great
awe of his power, a great sense of his goodness; the which
practice is in itself a direct and formal glorification of God,
in his own person.

He also thereby doth farther promote the glory of God,
instructing, exciting, and encouraging others to the like
practice of deferring respect and service to God; for natu-
rally men have such a capacity, such aptitude, such pro-
clivity to religion, (or to the acknowledgment and worship
of their Maker,) that when they behold others seriously
and earnestly pursuing it, they are easily drawn to conspire
therein; especially those who are not utterly perverted and
corrupted by ill custom.

And whereas good conversation hath a native beauty, ^{Ἀριστὴς δὲ}
affecting beholders with delight; whereas the fruits of ^{ἐκείνης τῆς}
virtue have a pleasing sweetness, grateful to all who taste ^{μὲν καὶ}
them; men from that sight and that sense will presently ^{τῶ ἵχοντι,}
be moved to commend the wisdom, and to bless the ^{ἡδύσσει διὰ}
goodness of him, who was pleased to institute so excellent ^{ἀμα ταῖς}
a religion, to enact so beneficial laws, to prescribe so <sup>κατανοή-
νους.</sup>
wholesome duties to us: for *when*, saith the most divine ^{Βασ. Ερ. 42.}
father, *an infidel shall see thee, a believer, to be* ^{Ὅταν γὰρ ἁ-}
vor— ^{πιστός, &c.}
staunch, sober, orderly, he will be astond, and will say, ^{Chrys. ἀνθ.}
In truth, great is the God of Christians: What men hath he ^{9. (p. 524.)}
made! what persons out of what persons hath he made
them! how from men hath he made them angels! If one
abuse them, they do not rail; if one smite them, they do
not resent; if one injure them, they pray for him that doeth
the offence; they know not to remember ill turns, they skill
not to be vain, they have not learnt to lie, they cannot abide
to forswear, or rather to swear at all, but sooner would
choose to have their tongue cut out, than to let an oath slip
out of their mouth.

So may we really glorify God; and otherwise than by
open practice we cannot do it; for glory doth require a
public stage; it implying, as Seneca saith, *the consent of*
many worthy persons declaring their esteem; it being, as

SERM. Cicero defineth it, *the agreeing praise of good men, with an incorrupted vote judging well of an excellent virtue.*
 LXIV.

Wherefore toward our being enabled to glorify God, two things must concur; that we be good men, and that we be openly such.

That we be good men, because otherwise our commendation will have no worth, or weight; for *praise is not comely in the mouth of sinners*: it is no ornament to be commended by ill men, to whose words little regard is due, little trust can be given.
 Non est speciosa laus in ore peccatoris. Ecclus. xv. 9.

That we be good openly, avowing God in practice con-
 2 Thess. i. x. ducing to his honour; otherwise no glory can accrue to him from our goodness: we may serve God, and please him in private; but we cannot by that service glorify him; at least at present, and here in this world. It is true, the closest piety will yield glory to God at the last, when our Lord shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in them that believe; but to design such a future glorification of God is not enough; it is our duty to glorify God now, that we may be rewarded for it, and that he may requite us with glory hereafter.

Psal. l. 23. God himself telleth us in the Psalm, *Who so offereth praise, he glorifieth me*; and how can praise be offered, or to what purpose will it be offered, otherwise than apparently, either in word or deed, by oral or by real expression, to the ears or to the eyes of men, so as to occasion in them the production of worthy conceptions and due affections toward God? In such a manner the holy man did offer it, who said, *I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee; I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation*: he did it sometimes with his mouth, which is a notable part of our conversation; but we may do it continually by our life; for, *He*, faith

* Gloria consensus multorum exigit.—Consentire in hoc plures insignes et prestantes viri debent, ut claritas sit. Sen. Ep. 102.

Gloria est consentiens laus bonorum incorrupta voce bene judicantium de eccellente virtute. Cic. 8. Tusc. init.

Gloria est frequens de aliquo fama cum laude. Cic. de Inv. ii. 39.

St. Austin, *who praiseth God with his tongue, cannot do* **SERM.**
that always; but he that praiseth God by his manners can **LXIV.**
always do it ^f.

This motive is by the great masters of our Christian practice frequently urged; for,

St. Paul wisheth the Philippians *to be filled with the* Phil. i. 11.
fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the
praise and glory of God; he prayeth for the Thessalonians,
that God would fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, 2 Thess. i.
and the work of faith with power, that the name of our ^{11—}
Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified in them; he particu-
larly doth incite the Corinthians to works of charity, that
by that ministration men might be induced to glorify 2 Cor. ix.
God, rendering him thankful praise for their beneficial ^{11—13.}
obedience.

St. Peter likewise doth exhort all Christians *to have* 1 Pet. ii.
their conversation honest among the Gentiles, that they ^{12.}
might by their good works, which they should behold, glo- ^{Ev. ἡμῶν}
rify God, in the day of visitation, (that is, perhaps, when
they carefully do view and reflect on them.)

Our Lord himself thus chargeth his disciples, *Let your* Matt. v. 16.
light so shine before men, that they may see your good
works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven; they Chrys.
did observe his command, and the effect did follow, many
being converted to God no less by the radiant integrity of
their life, than by the persuasive efficacy of their doctrine:
and, In this, saith our Lord again, is my Father glorified, John xv. 8.
if ye bear much fruit: what fruit was that? what but of
good works, visible to the eye and perceptible to the
taste; otherwise how could men thence find cause to glo-
rify God?

In fine, this is declared to be the peculiar design of our religion, or of the whole Christian institution; to this end we are made *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy* 1 Pet. ii. 9.
nation, a peculiar people, that we should shew forth the
praises (or virtues) of him, who hath called us out of dark-

^f Qui Deum laudat lingua, non semper potest; qui moribus Deum laudat, semper potest. *Alg. in 1. Ep. Joh. Tr. 8.*

SERM. *ness to his marvellous light*; not only by our profession,
 LXIV. but in our practice declaring his goodness.

Tit. i. 16. On the other hand, by stifling our virtue and conscience, in an open compliance with sin, or neglect of our duty, we greatly shall dishonour God; for thereby in effect we deny him and desert him; we injure his majesty, and disclaim our allegiance to him; we intimate our mean opinion of him, and small affection to him; we betray our want of reverence to his excellency, of dread to his greatness, of love to his goodness, of hope in his promises and gracious overtures of mercy, of fear in regard to his severe justice and fierce menaces; so immediately we dishonour him, and we thereby also do countenance disrespect and disobedience to him; and our behaviour tendeth to produce or to confirm the like irreligious dispositions of mind and impious practices in others; so that with horrible dissingenuity we cross the design of our creation, and violate our greatest obligations toward our Maker.

Tit. i. 16. Indeed what greater affront or more heinous indignity can we offer to God, than openly before the world, *by* the most real expression of *our works, to deny* and disown him; than to be notoriously ashamed or afraid to avow him for our Lord and Master; than to express no sense of our duty to him, no reverence of his authority, no gratitude for his benefits to us; than visibly to prefer any other consideration or worldly advantage before a regard to his will and pleasure?

In this, open sin doth outgo private wickedness, and putteth down even the worst hypocrisy, (beside its own,) that it not only offendeth God, but forely woundeth his honour, and exposeth his glorious name to contempt; by which consideration such miscarriages are frequently aggravated in holy Scripture; so in the Prophets God complaineth of his people, for having by their scandalous crimes *profaned his holy name among the heathen*; so St. Paul expostulateth with the Jew, *Thou that boastest of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?* so 2 Sam. xii. Nathan told David, that God would punish him, *because*

Ezek. xxxvi. 21—
 If. lii. 2.
 Rom. ii. 23.
 2 Sam. xii. 14.

by his bad deed he had given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. But, SERM.
LXIV.

4. We should be careful of our good behaviour in the sight of men, that we may thereby maintain the dignity and repute of our Christian profession, which by our naughty or negligent demeanour will be much disparaged and disgraced.

Most evident it is to reason, that a visible practice, conformable to the rules of our religion, cannot otherwise than exceedingly commend and grace it; for how can the goodness of a rule more surely obtain its due commendation, than from its being applied to observable practice and experience?

Affuredly charity, meekness, humility, patience, sobriety, discretion, and all Christian virtues, as in themselves they are very amiable and venerable to all men, as they yield great benefit and much pleasure to those whom their consequences do touch; so they do ingratiate the law which prescribeth them, they bring esteem to the principles whence they are derived; *he, as the Apostle* Rom. xiv. *saith, that in these things serveth Christ, is both acceptable* ^{18.} *to God and approved of men, as the follower of a most excellent rule.*

We may also consider, that a conspicuous practice, according to our religion, is a demonstrative proof that we do seriously and firmly embrace it, or that we are heartily and steadily persuaded of its truth; which is no small credit to any profession; arguing that it hath a good foundation in reason, apt to bottom and sustain a solid faith.

And as thereby we pregnantly do evidence that we ourselves do highly value the noble privileges, the excellent promises, the precious rewards exhibited in the Gospel; so we thereby do breed a like esteem in others; upon whom the authority of men apparently virtuous and conscientious infallibly will have a forcible influence.

Such a practice will have a great stroke toward evincing the truth and reality, the perfect excellency, the notable strength and efficacy of our religion; plainly shew-

SERM. ing, that it is not a mere name, an idle pretence, a weak
 LXIV. fancy, a dry speculation, a chimerical dream; but a vigorous and masculine principle, able to produce most worthy fruits of substantial goodness, *profitable to men*; conducive to our own welfare, and to the benefit of others.

As gallant actions, becoming a noble rank, elevated above the vulgar level, do illustrate and dignify nobility itself; so doth a worthy conversation, befitting our high station in the heavenly kingdom, our near alliances to God, those splendid titles and glorious privileges assigned to every faithful Christian in the evangelical charter, render our state admirable, and make it seem an excellent advantage to be a Christian.

Hence in the apostolical writings an observance of the evangelical laws is so much and often enforced by this consideration; for upon this account we are exhorted to a careful discharge of our duty, that *we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*; we are urged to *have our conversation worthy of the Gospel*; to *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called*, to behave ourselves *as worthily becometh saints*, (that is, persons instituted in so holy a religion, and designed to so peculiar excellency in virtue;) to *walk as children of the light*, (that is, of truth and knowledge revealed from heaven;) to *walk worthy of God, who hath called us unto his kingdom and glory*; *worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work*; the which enforcements of duty do imply a visible practice, producing the visible effects of ornament and credit to our religion, recommending it to the minds and consciences of men.

Contrariwise, the defect of good conversation before men in Christians is upon divers accounts disgraceful to our religion. For,

It tempteth men to judge, that we ourselves do not heartily believe its truth or value its worth; that we do not approve its doctrine for reasonable, or take its advantages for considerable; or deem the name and state of a Christian to be honourable; feeling we are not concerned to own them, or do not care to engage our reputation in

Tit. ii. 10.

Phil i. 27.

Eph. iv. 1.

Eph. v. 3.

Rom. xvi.

2.

Eph. v. 8.

1 Theff. ii.

12.

Col. i. 10.

avowing and abetting them in that way which doth best **SERM.**
 signify our mind and meanings: for men certainly will **LXIV.**
 judge of our sense not so much by what we say as from
 what we do; not by our verbal profession or pretence, but
 from our practice, as the surest indication of our heart.

Wherefore when they hear us to confess our faith, and
 see us act like infidels, they will be forced to esteem us
 either for subdolous hypocrites or for inconsistent fools;
 who assume the name of Christians, and pretend to great
 advantages thence, yet in effect do not mind or regard
 them; highly commending the rules of our religion, but
 not at all observing them; greatly admiring the example
 of our Saviour, but not caring to imitate it; describing
 heaven for a most happy place, but not striving to get
 thither in the sole way which our Lord prescribeth, of
 faithful and diligent obedience to his precepts.

Seeing, I say, this repugnance between our profession
 and our practice, will induce men to charge us with hy-
 pocrisy or folly; and if the professors be taken for coun-
 terfeits or fools, the profession itself will hardly scape
 from being held imposture or folly.

Our religion at least will thence be exposed to the cen-
 sures of being no better than a fond device, and a barren
 notion, unpracticable, ineffectual, and insignificant to any
 good purpose.

The visible misbehaviour, I say, of Christians will assur-
 edly derive obloquy and reproach on Christianity, if not
 as bad, yet as vain, impotent, impertinent and useless;
 especially those who are disaffected to it will hence take
 advantage to insult upon it with contemptuous scorn; To
 what, will they say, do your fine rules serve? what effects
 do your glorious hopes produce? where are the fruits of
 that holy faith and heavenly doctrine which you so extol
 and magnify?

Whereas also bad conversation commonly doth not
 only deprive men of the benefits which our religion pro-
 misseth, but doth carry with it hurtful fruits; men that see
 or feel them will be apt to impute them to religion.

ΕΙ ΔΕ ΤΙΣ ΙΔΕΥΧΘΗ ΠΡΑΞΑΣ ΤΙ ΔΥΣΜΟΝ, Ε ΤΑΥΤΟΣ Ε ΜΟΝΟΝ ΙΑΥΤΟΝ ΪΣΤΑΨΕΙΝ, ΑΛΛΑ ΚΑΙ
 ΒΛΑΣΦΗΜΙΑΝ ΠΡΟΑΙΝΕΨΕΙ Τῇ ΙΣΤΑΛΗΣΙ. *Corinth. Ap. ii. 8.*

SERM. If a Christian be unjust, censorious, factious, anywise
LXIV. offensive or troublesome, although irreligion be the cause
 of such things, yet religion must bear the blame, and they
 presently exclaim,

Quantum religio potuit suadere malorum.

Whence St. Paul (who as a powerful instructor doth impress matters of duty by the most proper motives) doth often and upon all occasions urge this consideration; he

• 2 Cor. vi. 3. *charge us to give no offence in any thing, that the ministry* (or evangelical dispensation) *be not blamed, or exposed to the censure of any captious Momus; he biddeth us to forbear harsh judgment and all uncharitable dealing,*

Rom. xiv. 16. *that our good be not evil spoken of; he presseth the discharge of our duty in each calling and relation, that by*

1 Tim. vi. 1. *neglect thereof the Gospel be not defamed: Let, saith he, as many servants as are under the yoke, count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and*

Tit. ii. 5. *his doctrine be not blasphemed; and, Let women be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed; and, I*

1 Tim. v. 14. *will that younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, (so as) to give no occasion to the adversary (that is, to persons disaffected to Christianity) to speak reproachfully* (of it): which discourse, by clear parity of reason, may be applied to any other state or relation.

Now seriously what greater mischief can we do, what heavier guilt may we contract, than by working dishonour to God's adorable name, than by casting reproach on God's heavenly truth, than by drawing a scandal on that holy religion, which the Son of God came down from heaven to establish, for the glory of God and salvation of mankind? Surely next after directly blaspheming God, and defying religion with our own mouths, the next crime is to make others to do so, or in effect to do it by their profane tongues.

Rom. ii. 24. *δι' ὑμᾶς.*

There remain divers arguments of very great moment, which the time will not suffer me to urge; and therefore I must reserve them to another occasion.

SERMON LXV.

PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT OF
ALL MEN.

ROM. xii. 17.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

I HAVE formerly discoursed upon this apostolical pre-
cept; and having declared the meaning of it, (briefly im-
porting that we should have a special care of our external
behaviour, coming under the view and observation of
men, that it be perfectly innocent and inculpable,) I did
propose divers motives inducing to the observance of it;
but divers others of great importance the time would not
allow me to urge; I shall therefore now proceed to offer
them to your consideration.

I did then shew that a regard to the reason and nature
of things, to the satisfaction of our conscience, to the ho-
nour of God, and to the credit of our religion, did require
from us a good conversation before men; I now farther
add, that,

I. The real interest of piety and virtue do exact such a
conversation, as the most effectual way of upholding, ad-
vancing, and propagating them among men.

Example is a very powerful thing either way, both for
attraction to good, and seduction to evil; such is the na-
ture of men, that they are more apt to be guided by the
practice of others than by their own reason, and more
easily can write after a copy than by a rule; that they

SERM.
LXV.

are prone to imitate whatever they see done, be it good or bad, convenient or inconvenient, profitable or hurtful, emulating the one, and aping the other; that they love to be in the fashion, and will go anywhither in company, presuming of support, defence, and comfort therein; that they will satisfy their minds and justify their doings by any authority, deeming that laudable or allowable, or at least tolerable and excusable, for which they can allege precedents; judging, that if they are not singular, they are innocent, or however not very culpable; that hardly they will undertake any thing without countenance, whereby their modesty is in some measure secured, and partners engaged to bear a share with them in the censure to which their deportment is liable. Hence a visible good conversation will have a great efficacy toward the promotion and propagation of goodness; the authority of that being adjoined to the native worth and beauty, to the rational plausibility, to the sensible benefit of virtue, will cogently draw men to it; it will be a clear pattern, whereby they shall be informed what they are obliged and what they are able to perform; it will be a notable spur, smartly exciting them to mind and pursue their duty; it will be a vigorous incentive, inflaming their courage, and provoking an emulation to do well.

The visible succour and countenance of many, espousing the cause of goodness by their practice, will assuredly bring it into request and vogue, and thence into current use and fashion; so just a cause cannot fail to prosper, having any reasonable forces to maintain it; it will have great strength, great boldness and assurance, when a considerable party doth appear engaged on its side.

Yea, sometimes even the example of a few will do it great service; the rarity giving a special lustre to their virtue, and rendering it more notable; according to that intimation of the Apostle, when he thus doth exhort the Philippians to a cheerful and forward practice of goodness; *Do all things, saith he, without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and*

Phil. ii. 14,
15.

perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. SERM.
LXV.

A good conversation doth notify good men to one another, and draweth them together, and combineth them in a party, for the protection of goodness, heartening and aiding one another therein.

Such advantages goodness doth always need; for it ever hath in the world many adversaries, striving by violent force to beat it down, or by treacherous fraud to supplant it; who use their authority and interest to suppress it; who by their evil example do seduce from it; who labour by detraction to blast it, by scorn and reproach to discourage it, by divers temptations and baits to entice from it; who combining their forces with the wicked spirits, and with the corrupt inclinations of men, do raise a mighty party for wickedness.

Wherefore, to balance such oppositions, goodness doth need friends to maintain it; not only friends in heart, or secret well-wishers; but open friends, who frankly will avow it, and both in word and deed will stoutly abet it.

A demure, bashful, timorous friendship, will rather prejudice than help it; for nothing will more animate its foes to assail and persecute it, than observing its friends to flink and sneak: when good men hide their faces, as if they were ashamed of their goodness, then bad men will grow more impudent and insolent in their outrages against it.

Wherefore, if we would have goodness hold up its head, we must openly take its part; if we would not be guilty of its ruin, we must stand up to uphold it; for whoever openly complieth with sin, or neglecteth his duty, may well be charged with its ruin; since if thou so desertest goodness, another after thy pattern may do the like, and a third may follow him; so the neglect of it may soon be propagated, until at length it may be quite abandoned, and left destitute of support: if it doth not thus happen, it will as to thee be accidental, and no thanks to thee for its better fortune.

The declension of piety is not perhaps more to be

SERM. ascribed to any other cause than to this, than that men
 LXV. who approve goodness in their hearts are so backward to
 shew it in their practice; that good men do so affect retirement and wrapping up their virtue in obscurity; that most men think it enough if in the cause of religion against profaneness and dissoluteness they appear neuters, and do not impugn it: for if in a time of infection all sound men do shut up themselves, and all sick men walk abroad, how necessarily must the plague reign in the place?

II. Charity toward our neighbour demandeth from us a great care of our conversation before men.

The law of charity, which is the great law of Christianity, doth oblige us earnestly to further our neighbour's good of all kinds, especially that which is incomparably his best good, the welfare of his soul; which how can we better do, than by attracting him to the performance of his duty to God, and by withdrawing him from the commission of sin? And how can we do that without an apparently good conversation, or without plainly declaring, as occasion sheweth, for virtue, both in word and deed? how can a shy reservedness conduce to that end? what will invisible thoughts or affections of heart confer thereto?

Rom. xlv. It is a precept of charity, that we should *pursue things*
 19. *wherewith one may edify another*: and how can we per-
 1 Cor. xlv. form that duty, without imparting our mind, and, as it
 26. were, transfusing it into others; so as by converting them from error and sin, by infilling good principles, by exciting good resolutions, to lay in them a foundation of goodness, or by cherishing and improving the same to rear a structure of virtue in them? how can we mutually edify without mutually advising virtue, exhorting to it, recommending and impressing it by our exemplary behaviour?

Παρακαλεῖ- The Apostles do enjoin, that we should *exhort one an-*
 σι ἀλλήλους. other, and edify one another; that we should *consider one*
 1 Thess. v. another, to provoke (or to whet and instigate one another)
 11. to love and to good works; the which can nowise be per-
 Heb. x. 24. formed, without expressly declaring for goodness and re-
 Εἰς ἀγα- markables acting in its behalf: to commend and press it
 ξουρίαν. by word is a part of our duty; but not all of it, nor suf-

sufficient to this purpose; especially seeing we cannot urge **SERM.**
that with good confidence, nor shall be held serious in **LXV.**
pleading for it, which we do not ourselves embrace in
practice; for how can we expect that our reason should
convince others, when it doth not appear really to have
persuaded ourselves, when our doings evidently do argue
the weakness of our discourse?

Words hardly will ever move without practice, al-
though practice sometimes will persuade without words;
according to that of St. Peter, *Ye wives, be in subjection to* 1 Pet. iii. 1.
your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they may
without the word be won by the conversation of the wives,
while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear,
(or due reverence to them.)

Again; We are frequently commanded to shun the giv- 1 Cor. x. 32.
ing any offence, or the putting a stumbling-block, or an ^{viii. 9.}
occasion to fall, in the way of our brother; that is, to do ^{2 Cor. vi. 3.}
any thing, which anywise may confer to his incurring ^{Rom. xiv.}
any sin: the which precepts are violated not only by po- ^{13.}
sitive and active influence, by proposing erroneous doc-
trine, evil advice, fraudulent enticements to sin, or discour-
agements from duty; but also by withholding the means
serving to prevent his transgression; such as a tacit indulg-
ence or connivance, when good admonition may reclaim
him; the omission of good example, when it is seasonable,
and probably may prove efficacious: for these neglects
have a moral causality, inducing or encouraging the com-
mission of sin; our silence, our forbearing to act, our de-
clining fair opportunities to guide him into the right way
will be taken for signs of approbation and consent; and
consequently as arguments to justify or to excuse bad
practice, in proportion to the authority and esteem we
have; which ever will be some in this case, when they
favour the infirmity of men.

Charity doth farther oblige us, upon just cause, and in
due season, to check and reprove our neighbour misde-
meaning himself; for, *Warn the disorderly,* saith the Apo- 1 Thess. v.
tle; and, *Have no fellowship,* saith he, *with the unfruitful* ^{14.}
works of darkness, but rather reprove them; and, *Thou* ^{Eph. v. 11.}
^{Levit. xix.}

SERM. *shalt not, saith the Law, hate thy brother in thy heart,*
 LXV. *thou shalt in anywise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him:* where forbearance of reproof is implied to shew not only a defect of charity, but hatred of our brother; and a good reason is intimated for it, because in so doing we suffer sin to lie upon him; not hindering his progress in it, not endeavouring his conversion from it: but reproof is an overt act; involving somewhat of openness and plain freedom, such as the Wife Man doth prefer before close good-will; for, *Open rebuke, saith he, is better than secret love.*

Prov. xxii.
5.

We are all thus far *the keepers of our brethren*, and it is a charge incumbent on us, by all good means to preserve them from the worst of mischiefs.

In fine, there is plainly nothing more inconsistent with true charity, than such a compliance with sin or neglect of duty in the sight of our neighbour, which is scandalous, or may prove contagious to him; for how can we love him, whose chief good, whose eternal welfare we do not tender? whom we do not fear to seduce into the way of extreme misery, or do not at least care to lead into the way of happiness? whom without any check we can suffer to forfeit the best goods, and to incur the saddest calamities?

Wherefore if the love of ourselves and a sober regard to our own welfare be not sufficient to induce us, yet a charitable disposition and a concernedness for our neighbour (for our brethren, our relations, our friends) should move us to a good, innocent, virtuous, fruitful, and exemplary conversation: if we do not care to save ourselves, yet let it pity us to damn and destroy others by our negligence.

Rom. xiv.
15.

III. But if charity will not move us, yet justice, exacting from us a care of our good conversation before men, should constrain us thereto.

Exemplary and edifying conversation is a debt which we owe to the world, a good office imposed on us by the laws of common humanity.

When without our own hurt or inconvenience we can do considerable good to our neighbour, he hath a title

thereto, (granted by the common Author of our nature, **SERM.**
the absolute Lord of all we are or have,) and he may justly **LXV.**
demand it from us; as we in like case might claim it
from him, and certainly would in matters agreeable to
our humour expect it: wherefore seeing good conversa-
tion not only doth not harm or incommode us, but is
most beneficial to ourselves, and it exceedingly may be-
nefit our neighbour, it is most just that we should afford it
to him; it is no more than fair dealing to do it; to neg-
lect it is a real injury to him.

To set ill example before our neighbour, or (which is in
part and in effect the same) to withhold good example
from him, (for not to give a good example is a bad thing,
and so a bad example; this,) I say, is plainly a great ini-
quity, and a wrong to him. For,

Is it not an injury to offer a cup of poison to any man,
to invite him to drink it, to be his taster of it, so drawing
him to take it off without suspicion or fear of deadly mis-
chief? is it not an injury to forbear warning him thereof,
or not to deter him from it, when it standeth before him,
and he is ready to put it to his mouth? would not such
a man in all conscionable esteem pass for a murderer of
his neighbour?

Is it not a great wrong to carry any man out of his
way (out of a right, easy, fair, and safe road) into mazes,
thickets, and sloughs, or into intricate, foul, dangerous
by-ways? Is it not wrongful, when he doth wander or err,
not to reduce him thence, not to set him in the right
way?

Is it not very foul dealing to bring a man to a steep
precipice, and thence to leap down before him? is it not
so, not to stop him, when he is on the brink, and blindly
moving forward to cast himself down headlong?

If these be injurious dealings, then palpably it is far
more such to yield any enticements or encouragements,
yea not to put obstructions, if we are able, to our neigh-
bour's incurring sin, which to his soul is all those things;
the most baneful venom, the most woful exorbitancy, the
most pernicious gulf that can be.

SERM. LXV. We by *sinning* do not only, as the Wise Man saith, *wrong our own souls*, but we do also wrong the souls of others; drawing them or driving them, by the efficacious impulse of our example, into mischief and misery; for, *When*, saith St. Paul, *ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ*: he there speaketh of bad example; the which he not only affirmeth to be sinful in regard of Christ, but calleth it *sinning against our brethren*^a; and supposeth that we thereby do wound or smite their conscience; which to do is surely no less wrong to them, than if we should assault, beat, and wound their bodies; the wounds of conscience being of all most grievous, and producing most insupportable affliction; according to that of the Wise Man, *The spirit of a man will bear his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear?*

Τὸν πνεῦμα
ἀνδρὸς τὸν
ἐννοεῖται
ἀνδρὸς—

Prov. xviii.
14.

Lam. v. 16.

1 Cor. viii.
11.

Indeed by thus hurting our neighbour, we do him a wrong, not only very great in itself, but such as may probably be irreparable, for which hardly we can ever be able to make him any restitution or compensation; for a better example scarce will reach all whom a bad example hath touched; the best example hardly will avail to undo that which a bad example hath done; if thereby we have engaged our neighbour in sin, we by no means can restore his lost innocence, or prevent his saying, *Woe be to me, for I have sinned*: it will be very difficult to recover him into that state (that sound condition of soul) from which we did move him; it will however cost him, if not a final ruin, yet a fore repentance; the pangs whereof no compensation which we can yield will requite: the wounds which we thereby do inflict may rankle and prove incurable; they assuredly will find no easy cure; they must however either in consequence or in the correction be very painful; and they will leave an ugly scar behind them.

The injustice of this practice may also farther appear upon divers special accounts.

^a Ὁ γὰρ ἀμαρτάνων ἐπὶ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ δυνάται εἰσδομηνθῆναι εἰς τὸ ἐπὶ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα. *Conf. Ap. ii. 17.*

All men esteem pity a debt which one man oweth to **SERM.**
 another, as liable to grief and misery, (the obligation **LXV.**
 whereto is written in the bowels of each man;) which
 pity will incline to succour the object of it in danger or
 distress; wherefore every man by the natural law is bound
 to endeavour the prevention or the rescue of another fall-
 ing into mischief; according to that of St. Jude, *Of some* **Jude 22, 23.**
have compassion, making a difference, and others save with
fear, pulling them out of the fire; whence to draw men
 into sin by ill practice, or not to restrain them from it by
 good, is unjust, as a pitiless, hardhearted, cruel thing^b.

Again; All men hold flattery to be a practice very
 abusive, or more than simply wrongful; as with injury
 joining contempt and cozenage; taking advantage of a
 man's infirmity to work prejudice to him; it is indeed
 a mischievous, a pernicious, and withal a perfidious, an
 insidious, an ensnaring practice; for, *A flattering mouth,* **Prov. xxxi.**
saith the Wise Man, worketh ruin; and, *A man that flat-* **30.**
tereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feet: but flat- **Favour is**
 tery is not only verbal; the worst flattery is not that **deceitful.**
 whereby men sooth and glose with their lips, encourag- **Prov. xxvi.**
 ing others by fictitious commendations to persist in bad **28.**
 courses; there is a tacit flattery, when by our connivance **Prov. xxix.**
 at sin we seem to approve it; there is a real flattery, when **5.**
 by our compliance with sin we recommend it to our ca-
 merades; these do not look so grossly, yet do insinuate
 our mind, and commonly do inveigle to sin more effec-
 tually; men being more apt to trust our deeds than our
 words, being more pleased in our vouching their actions
 by a participation in them, and running a common hazard
 with them, than in our straining to commend or to ex-
 cuse them: whence it is, that gross flattery hath its effect
 chiefly upon simpler folks, but this subtle flattery doth
 often gull and abuse persons of greatest capacity.

Again; A good conversation before men is a part of that
 due respect which we owe to them. There is a regard

^b 1 Sam. iii. 13. (His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them
 not.)

SERM. and a kind of reverence to be had toward every man;
LXV. which should engage us to behave ourselves decently in

his presence, signifying a consideration and esteem of his person, of his opinion, of his resentment, of his affection toward us: to do any foul or unhandsome thing is a contempt of him, a rudeness toward him, an affront put on him; whereby in effect we do slight, disparage, and reproach him; implying, that we do little value his judgment, that we care not for his good-will; that we presume he hath not the sense to discern, or hath not the spirit to dislike, or must have the patience to comport with our unseemly and unfavoury carriage. And if to do other unhandsome things before men is such an indignity offered to them, then it is especially such to commit sin before them, which is the most ugly, the most fordid, the most loathsome behaviour that can be; there is no deformity, no turpitude in nature comparable to sin; nothing so offensive, so distasteful, so abominable to a rational sense; so that the Wise Man's saying is very true, taken any way, *He that despiseth his neighbour, sinneth*: it is both a sin to contemn him, and sinning is an argument of contempt toward him; nor can we better observe St. Peter's injunction, that we *honour all men*, than by forbearing to sin in their presence, out of respect to them. But farther,

Prov. xiv.
21. xi. 12.

1 Pet. ii. 17.

IV. Let us consider, that a good conversation before men is a public benefit, a great advantage to the world and common state of men.

It is not only a good office of charity to this or that man; but it layeth a general obligation on our country, on our age, on posterity itself; upon which a fruitful life, an exemplary virtue may have notable influence.

As notorious sin is a plague to the world, throwing infection and death about it; provoking the wrath of Heaven, and thence deriving vengeance on it; so notable virtue is a general blessing, producing most wholesome and comfortable effects to mankind.

For how can one more oblige the public, than by conferring help to uphold the reputation, and to propagate the entertainment of those things, which are the main

props of the world, for the sake of which it standeth, and by the means of which it is sustained; than by preserving the virtue and power of conscience, which is the band of all society, the guardian of faith and honesty, the best enforcer of justice, order, and peace in the State, (that which *exalteth a nation, and establisheth a kingdom;*) than by producing and promoting those things which certainly will procure the favour and blessing of God on any people? SERM. LXV.

How can a man better deserve of the world, than by concurring to stop the contagion of sin, and the over-spreading deluge of iniquity, together with all the lamentable mischiefs consequent on them; than by averting the fierce wrath and severe judgments of God, which a general prevalence of wickedness necessarily will bring down?

Most men pretend to be concerned even for the honour of their country; and how can we better promote that than by checking the progress of *sin*, which will not only be the bane, but is, as Solomon telleth us, *the reproach of any people?* Prov. xiv. 34. xx. 28.

It may possibly be, it hath really been, that the conspicuous virtue of a few men (yea sometimes of one single person) hath leavened a country, hath seasoned an age, hath imbued posterity with an admiration of goodness, and with an affection to it. (*One man, saith St. Chrysostom, inflamed with zeal may suffice to reform an entire people*^c.) So among the Pagans one person did set up the study of morality, and worthily was styled *the parent of* (that most useful) *philosophy*; whereby he did exceedingly benefit mankind, and did confer much toward preparing men for the reception of our heavenly philosophy. Socrates philosophise pagans. Cic.

Such our Lord designed his Apostles to be; for, *Ye, saith he, are the lights of the world, ye are the salt of the earth*; and such in effect they did prove, *God by them*, as *2 Cor. ii. St. Paul saith, manifesting the favour of his knowledge in every place*; they not only by their heavenly doctrine,

^c Ἀρκὴ εἰς ἄνθρωπος; ζήλῳ πισχυμένους ὁλόκληρον διορθώσασθαι δῆμον. Chrys. ἀνδρ. α'.

SERM. but chiefly by the lustre and influence of their holy
LXV. example, converting the world from impious errors and
 naughty practices unto true religion and virtuous conver-
 sation; they did lead men to goodness not only by
 the ears, but by the eyes, seeing their excellent life, and

Phil. iii. 17. walking as they had them for ensamples.

1 Cor. xi. 1.

iv. 16.

2 Thess. iii.

7, 9.

It consequently may be, yea hath been, that the sin-
 gular integrity of one, or of a few persons, displaying it-
 self, hath appeased divine wrath, and hath staved off im-
 minent ruin from a people. So one Noah, publicly main-
 taining and *preaching righteousness*, did preserve the whole
 race of men from extirpation; so ten persons avowing

2 Pet. ii. 5.

Gen. xviii. 32.

righteousness would have kept Sodom from that rueful
 destruction; so one good man (notably owning God, and
 interposing for the concerns of piety) might have pre-
 vented that calamitous vengeance which fell upon Israel;

Jer. v. 1.

as Jeremy told before, and Ezekiel affirmed after it; *Run
 ye to and fro, saith God in Jeremy, through the streets of
 Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad
 places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that
 executeth judgment, that seeketh truth, and I will pardon*

Ezek. xxii.

30.

*it: and, I sought for a man, saith God in Ezekiel, among
 them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap
 before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I
 found none; therefore have I poured mine indignation upon
 them: there was then a remnant of those who closely
 did serve God; and perhaps seven thousand unknown per-
 sons, who had not in their hearts deserted religion; but
 this did not avert God's wrath, or preserve the nation
 from captivity; as a few openly professing and resolutely
 practising goodness might have done.*

Isa. i. 9.

1 Kings

xix. 14, 18.

Now who would not be glad of being so public a
 friend, so general a benefactor, in performing that which
 doth otherwise so much become him, and so greatly be-
 hove him; yielding him the best ornaments and highest
 advantages even upon his private account? who would
 not be ambitious both to oblige his country, and to save
 his own soul together, by a worthy conversation?

Affuredly nothing can be devised more conducive to

the effecting a reformation and amendment of the world, **SERM.**
(and consequently to the prosperity and felicity of man- **LXV.**
kind here,) than a conspiracy of good men in a frank and
brisk avowing of goodness in the face of the world.

V. A care of our conversation in the sight of men is
needful for the preservation of our good name and fair
repute among them.

A good name in holy Scripture is represented as a spe- **1 Chron.**
cial gift and blessing of God, bestowed in recompense of **xxix. 12.**
piety and virtue, and preferred before other most confi- **Eccl. vi. 2.**
derable gifts and blessings concerning our external state; **(Eccl. vii. 1.)**
for, *By humility, faith the Wise Man, and the fear of the* **Prov. xxii.**
Lord are riches and honour; both are the rewards of piety; **4.** **(Pf. cxii. 9.)**
but comparing them, *A good name, faith he, is rather to* **Prov. xxii.**
be chosen than great riches: it cannot therefore be a con- **1.**
temptible thing, nor ought it to be neglected by us; for
none of God's gifts, no reward which he proposeth, ought
to be slighted.

Reason and experience also do concur in shewing that a
good repute is a valuable thing, not only as a fair orna-
ment of our persons, and a commodious instrument of ac-
tion toward our private welfare, as a guard of our safety
and quiet, as serving to procure divers conveniences of
life; but as very advantageous, very useful upon moral **As' q'morep.**
and spiritual accounts; qualifying us with greater ease **as r'm. An-**
and efficacy to serve God, and to do good; for indeed it **son. iv. §. 19.**
is manifest, that without it we shall be incapable of doing
God or man any considerable service.

Wherefore in duty and wisdom we should be careful of
preserving this jewel; the which we cannot otherwise do,
than by observing this apostolical rule, of *providing things*
honest in the sight of all men; for a good conversation is
the only guard and convoy of a good name: how can
men conceive good opinion of us otherwise than from a
view of worthy qualities and good deeds? They may cha-
ritably hope, but they cannot confidently judge well of us
otherwise than upon good evidence: *Ye shall know them* **Matt. vii.**
by their fruits, (that is, by apparent works, falling under **16. xii. 33.**
human cognizance,) is the rule whereby our Saviour

SERM. teacheth us to distinguish of men, and to build a right
 LXV. opinion concerning them. Honour is the shadow, the
 inseparable attendant of conspicuous virtue.

A good conversation will indeed command esteem, and
 irresistibly extort respect from all men.

Wife and good men heartily will approve it, and gladly
 will yield it due commendation; they cannot but honour
 Rom. xiv. it whenever they see it, as best suiting with their own judg-
 18. ment and with their affection.

Yea it will procure respect even from the worst men;
 for it is a mistake to think that bad men really do or can
 despise true goodness: in truth, however they may pre-
 tend or make a shew to slight and scorn it, however in
 words they may flout and revile it, yet in their hearts
 they cannot but admire and reverence it; although their
 will may be so perverted as to set them against it, yet
 their reason cannot be so destroyed (or natural light so
 quenched in them) as to disapprove it; they do but vilely
 dissemble, and belie their conscience, when they make
 as if they did condemn or contemn it: *As, saith St.*
Chrysostom, they who openly do flatter ill livers, do in
their mind reprove them; so they who envy the workers of
good, in their conscience will admire and approve them^d:
 at least they will do thus in their sober mind; when
 with any serious application they do reflect on things;
 when the eye of their soul is anywise cleared from the
 mists of lust and passion: it is not to be heeded what they
 say in a flutter or ranting mood, when they are near out
 of their wits, and have their judgment stifled by sensual
 imaginations; but what they think when their mind is
 somewhat composed, and natural light doth shine freely
 in it.

Indeed such wretches really do most despise those who
 consort and comply with them in sinful follies; as they
 cannot in their hearts honour themselves, so they cannot
 esteem those whom they find like unto them; especially

^d Οἱ ἐν βλασφημίᾳ τοῦτο ποιοῦντες, κατὰ τὸ συνιδὸς ὑμᾶς θαυμάζουσιν, καὶ ἀποδι-
 ξονται ὥστε ἢ οἱ φανερῶς καλαινόντες τοὺς ἐν πονηρίᾳ ζῶντας, κατὰ τὴν διαβολή-
 ναν. Chrys. in Matt. v. 16.

they despise those whom they observe to be so base and SERM.
filly, as against their own judgment and conscience to LXV.
fear their displeasure or to regard their censure; looking
upon them as vassals to their humour, and renegadoes
from their own conscience.

Moreover a good conversation certainly will engage
Almighty God to protect our reputation, and to confer
honour upon us. For he as Governor of the world, the
Patron of goodness, the Dispenser of proper rewards to all,
is in a manner bound to encourage those openly who visi-
bly do own him and take his part, who promote his glory
and interest, who pay him due service and obedience,
who in regard to his authority do faithfully pursue that
which is right and good; he surely will see fit to repay
such in the same kind, by openly acknowledging, coun-
tenancing, and honouring them: accordingly he hath tied
himself to do so by his express word and promise; for, *Them,* ^{1 Sam. ii.}
saith he, that honour me, I will honour; and they that de-
spise me, shall be lightly esteemed: he said it in reference
to old Eli, who had neglected the duty of *restraining his*
sons from sin; which is a case very much of kin to all neg-
lect of exemplary piety. And, *Whosoever,* saith our Lord, ^{Luke xii. 8.}
shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also
confess before the angels of God; but he that denieth me
before men, shall be denied before the angels of God: the
which (one most comfortable, the other most terrible) sen-
tences are to be understood, He that confesseth our Lord
not merely by verbal profession, (for divers such who *say,* ^{Matt. vii.}
Lord, Lord, he will not so much as *know* at the final judg-
ment,) but in real practice; he that denieth him, not only
by renouncing him with the tongue, but by disobeying
him in scandalous conversation, by working iniquity, by
the apostasy of bad manners.

VI. Lastly; The public discharge of a good conscience
will yield manifold advantages and great benefits to our-
selves; not only as good (and thence needful to our salva-
tion and our comfort) but as public; some of which I
shall touch.

- Such a practice will much secure and strengthen us in

SERM. goodness; for he that hath the heart with resolution and
LXV. constancy to do well, notwithstanding any worldly discouragement, although he thereby doth cross the humour of the world, and incurreth the displeasure, envy, hatred, censure, and obloquy of men, he thus having exalted his virtue above the favour and fear of the world, hath set it in a safe place, hath rendered it impregnable.

The consideration of having attained so happy and so worthy a victory over the most dangerous temptations
 1 John v. 4. (the victory of faith over the world) will be very comfortable; and the sufferings which (from the disfavour, enmity, and opposition of men) do attend such a practice, being a kind of martyrdom, will yield all the joys and comforts (together with the hopes and rewards) of an heroic patience.

It will afford great satisfaction of mind to reflect on the consequences of such a practice; and to consider that our resolution hath engaged or confirmed others in goodness, hath preserved them from sin, hath withdrawn them from bad courses, and saved them from perdition; that we have been instrumental to the salvation and happiness of any soul; that, beside our own sins, (which are a burden too heavy for any man well to bear,) we have not the sins of others to account for, and shall not be loaded with the guilt of those whom our neglect of duty, our compliance with sin, our stupid coldness and indifference in regard to spiritual affairs, our dissimulation or connivance at the scandalous violation of God's honour and transgression of his laws, might have encouraged in sin; that we are not liable to that reproof in the Prophet, *Ye have strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way.*
 Ezek. xiii. 22.

We shall highly oblige those whom by our good endeavour or example we shall convert to righteousness, or reclaim from iniquity, or shall anywise stop in their career to ruin; who when they shall recover from their error, and soberly reflect on their case, (when they shall ~~drunkenly~~ *become* again sober, getting out as it were of their drunken fit,) will heartily thank us, will bless us, will pray for us, as having laid on them a very great obli-
 2 Tim. ii. 26.

tion, and done them the greatest kindness that could be; **SERM.**
 so that they will be ready to say to us, as David did to **LXV.**
Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent thee **Sam. xxv.**
this day to meet me: and blessed be thy advice, and blessed **32.**
be thou, which hast kept me this day from shedding of blood;
 this will be the consequence of plain dealing in such cases,
 and that will be fulfilled which the Wise Man saith, *He* **Prov. xxviii.**
that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour **23. xxvii. 6.**
than he that flattereth with the tongue. **xix. 25.**

We thereby shall escape the sore complaints and fell
 curses of those whom our naughty or careless demeanour
 hath involved in sinful practice; for when their conscience
 is awakened into a sense of their guilt, when they feel the
 stings of remorse, when they perceive the extreme da-
 mage and woe which they have incurred, then will they
 discharge their resentments of heart against those who
 have anywise been accessory to their fall into such a con-
 dition; then in their bitterness of soul, in the agony of their
 sorrow and perplexity, they will be apt to exclaim, *Cur-*
sed be the day that I knew such an one, or that I did con-
verse with him, who did betray me into this plight, who
did inveigle me into temptation, who did not pluck me
back from that sinful practice by which I now so deeply
suffer; cursed be his base cowardice, his fond modesty,
his affected wisdom, his treacherous negligence, his un-
consoionable indifference, his impious want of zeal for
God's honour and charity for my soul, which did keep
him from checking me in my bad courses and reclaiming
me to my duty by wholesome reproof, by seasonable ad-
vice, by exemplary practice before me: it will surely be a
great comfort to us, that we have not given occasion for
such complaints; but in proportion may say with St.
Paul, I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not **Acts xx.**
shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. **26.**

It is also no small advantage to us, that by a good con-
 versation we shall procure the particular friendship and af-
 fection of good men; for it is that which discovereth good
 men to one another, which kindleth their affection toward
 each other, which draweth them together, and breedeth

SERM. a familiarity between them, and knitteth their hearts together in a holy love; from whence they come to enjoy the faithful advice, the kind assistance, the seasonable consolations, and the hearty prayers each of other; the which great benefits are lost by concealment of ourselves, and reservedness in doing good; for how can any man know him to deserve love, whose goodness is not discernible?

LXV.

Such considerations may induce all persons, of every rank and condition, to observe this apostolical precept, so far as their capacities do reach; I shall only adjoin, that it especially doth concern persons of quality, in proportion to their eminency in dignity, power, authority, reputation, or any peculiar advantage, whereby the beneficial efficacy of good conversation is increased.

Matt. v. 14. Such persons are like *a city seated on a mountain, which cannot be hid*; the height of their station and lustre of their quality do expose them to the observation of all; and their authority doth recommend their practice to the imitation of observers.

Their example cannot fail of having a mighty influence; its light doth guide men, its weight doth sway them; it doth seem to warrant and authorize practice; inferiors would be afraid or ashamed to discontinue from it.

They have not the temptations which other men have to comply with sin out of fear, out of complaisance, out of design; they being to lead and give law, not to follow or receive it; they being the first movers in conversation; the fashion being regulated by them, or indeed being merely a conformity to their deportment.

**Conft. A-
post. ii. 17.** They should by their innocence qualify themselves to reprove others with authority and courage.

They in gratitude to God, who hath bestowed on them such advantages, are obliged to employ them for his service.

**Rom. xiii.
3—6.
1 Pet. ii. 14.** They particularly were designed and endowed with those advantages, that by them they might countenance, might encourage, might reward, might by all means promote goodness in the world.

They accordingly are responsible for the influence

their conversation hath ; so that in the final account most
actions of men will lie at their door, so that they shall re-
spectively be either highly rewarded for the virtues and
good works, or severely punished for the vices and sins of
mankind : the which most weighty consideration I leave
by God's grace to be seriously applied by them, who are
concerned therein.

SERM.
LXV.

SERMON LXVI.

PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT
OF ALL MEN.

2 COR. viii. 21.

*Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the
Lord, but also in the sight of men.*

SERM. **LXVI.** IF we observe the world, we may easily therein discern many persons, who being inwardly well disposed (standing right both in judgment and affection to goodness) are yet loath to appear very good, and hardly will own Christian virtue in the constant discharge of public duties, or in strict abstinence from sinful practices; but commonly (against the dictate of their reason, and sense of their heart) neglect the one, and comply with the other: an odd sort of hypocrites or dissemblers; who studiously conceal their better part, and counterfeit themselves worse than they are; who adore God in their hearts, and address devotions to him in their closets, but scarce will avow him in their visible profession and practice; who have a conscience, but are shy of disclosing it, or letting it take air, and walk in open light, confining it as a criminal to close restraint or obscure retirement; who gladly would be religious and staunch, if there might be no notice taken of it, but take care of being remarkable (or as it were scandalous) for it; who think fit to compromise and compound the business between God and the world, maintaining a neutrality and correspondence with both, so as privately to court the one, and publicly to close with the other.

Such practice is flatly repugnant to that rule, which SERM. elsewhere in precept, and here by his own example, the LXVI. holy Apostle doth recommend to us; directing us not Rom. xii. only *before God*, (that is, in our heart, and in our secret ^{17.} retirements, which God alone doth behold,) but also *before* ἔναντιον ἀνθρώπων. *men*, that is, in our external and visible conversation, carefully to perform things good and laudable, eschewing whatever is bad or culpable.

Our obligation to which rule hath already been confirmed by divers other precepts in holy Scripture, concurring in the injunction of it; and its observance urged by various positive considerations of great weight and force, (declaring how necessary it is for promoting God's honour and glory, how requisite it is for maintaining the dignity of our profession, and advancing the interests of goodness, how charity and justice toward our neighbour do exact it from us, how conducive it is to the public benefit of mankind, and how advantageous in many respects to our own particular welfare;) and not insisting farther upon those considerations, I shall now only enforce it by scanning the common principles, grounds, motives, pretences or excuses of the contrary practice, which I before touched, of openly deserting virtue, or declining the performance of duty before men; and by shewing how very foolish and vain, how very naughty and base, how very mischievous, dangerous, and pernicious they are.

They chiefly are those which I shall immediately touch and reflect upon.

1. Men commonly in their visible conversation do neglect their duty, or comply with sin out of modesty; because they are ashamed of doing that which may expose them to some disgrace or censure; because virtuous practice may raise distaste in the company, and provoke the scorn of those with whom they converse; because such a point of duty is out of request, and slighted in the world; they are afraid of men's faces; their tender forehead can- Jer. i. 8. not sustain derision, or endure to be flouted for being out of the mode, and wearing an uncouth garb of conscience.

But this plainly is a perverse and unmanly modesty; a

SERM. fond, a vile, a shameful shame : lie on it ! should any man
LXVI. be ashamed of that, which is his chief beauty, his best ornament, his sole dignity and glory ? should a man be ashamed of being evidently wise in his conduct, of following his reason, of consulting his true interest, of pursuing his own certain welfare and felicity ? is it fit that any man should be ashamed of paying due acknowledgment, of yielding due reverence, of rendering due gratitude, of performing due service to his Creator, sovereign Lord, and great Benefactor ; to whom he oweth all, upon whose will he entirely dependeth, at whose absolute disposal he is ? Surely these are no shameful things, but such rather wherein we ought to have the greatest confidence, which we ought to perform with the greatest assurance.

If we are bashful, let us be so in regard to things which are truly shameful ; let us be ashamed of sin, that is, of our most real deformity, our turpitude, our disgrace, our wretchedness ; the which indeed is the only dishonourable and despicable thing ; the which did first produce shame, and did introduce it into the world, (for while innocence did abide, there was no shame,) and the which will ever carry shame along as its inseparable adherent : it would indeed become us to blush at our horrible unworthiness and detestable ingratitude toward our bountiful Lord, and most gracious Redeemer ; it were proper for us to be confounded at our extreme folly and foul treachery toward ourselves, in betraying our souls to guilt, to regret, to wrath and punishment : who should be ashamed, who not, the holy Psalmist hath well taught us, *Let none that wait on thee be ashamed ; let them be ashamed which transgress without cause : and, Let the proud be ashamed—but let my heart be found in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.*

Gen. iii. 2.
ii. 25.

Ps. xxv. 3.
Psalm. cxix.
78—80.

It is true modesty to be ashamed of doing unworthy and unhandsome things ; but to be ashamed of doing what reason and duty require, is pitiful weakness of mind.

We do not owe so much regard to vicious and vain persons, as to be dashed out of countenance by them ; we should rather by our masculine resolution and upright confidence put them to confusion.

Tit. ii. 8.

If shame be an evil which we would avoid, the only SERM. LXVI. remedy thereof we may learn from those words of the Psal. cxix. Psalmist, *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to thy testimonies*: but it is a fond course to shun disgrace by 6. doing that which alone deserveth it.

Is it not also a wild thing to seem modest toward men, while we are really so bold with God, as presumptuously to offend him, to affront him, to *provoke him* (as those in the Prophet did) *to his face*? for so indeed every sinner doth; and as it is the greatest inadvertency not to consider God alway present with us, so it is the height of impudence to sin in his presence, or to prefer a regard to men before the reverence due to his eye ^{2.}

Is it not also great folly for declining a little present transient disgrace, to do that whereof afterward we shall be grievously and perpetually ashamed; which we shall never remember or reflect upon without confusion, (according to that of the Apostle, *What fruit had ye of those things whereof ye are now ashamed?*) the consequence whereof is our standing obnoxious to *shame and everlasting contempt*. Wisd. iv. 20. Jer. xxii. 22. Rom. vi. 21. Dan. xii. 2.

If we be thus ashamed of God, and of our duty to him, may he not justly in recompense be ashamed of us, and disdain to own us in favour and mercy? He will surely, he hath often declared so; *Whoever, saith our Lord, shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.* Luke ix. 26. xii. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

2. Another principle, near of kin to the former, disposing men to commit sin, or wave duty in their open conversation, is fear of losing the good-will, or getting the ill-will of men.

It must often happen, that whoever will be virtuous, and stick to his duty, will forfeit the favour of men, will incur their displeasure, will provoke their indignation; by crossing their humour and conceit, by implicitly slighting their opinion and condemning their practice: this is the portion

• • Quid quæso rationis habet verecundari ad diem hominis, et vultum Dei non vereri? *Bern. Ep. 108.*

SERM. and fate of strict and stiff piety; the friendship of God and
LXVI. the world are not well consistent; and St. Paul's rule may

Jam. iv. 4. be converted, *If I should please men, I should not be the*
 1 John ii. *servant of Christ*: hence men prizing the favour of men
 15.
 Gal. i. 10. with the advantages of it, and dreading their anger, hatred, disdain, with the mischiefs consequent on them, are scared from their duty.

But in truth this is a silly, a base, a sorry fear, arguing wretched meanness of spirit, and pitiful cowardice. For,

Dost thou, fond wretch, fear to lose the favour of man, whose favour doth avail nothing to thy main interests, and cannot anywise considerably benefit thee, (for in no respect dost thou depend on his will and providence,) but dost not fear being deprived of God's favour, upon which all thy good hangeth, wherein thy felicity consisteth, without which thou art incapable of any prosperity, of any security, of any joy or comfort?

Dost thou fear the displeasure of man, of poor impotent
 Job xxv. 6. man, a sorry frail worm, whose *breath is in his nostrils*,
 Is. ii. 22. (ready to fly away in every moment,) whose anger can do thee no real harm, whose power can hardly touch thee,
 Matt. x. 29. can nowise reach thy soul or its concerns; whilst thou darest not to offend the eternal almighty God, under whose feet thou liest, ready to be crushed into nothing, or stamped down into hell at his pleasure?

Darest thou not, O heartless dastard, to do that which is in thy power easily to do, which thou art infinitely concerned to do, which upon so many accounts thou art obliged to do, out of fear to cross thine equal, yea far thine inferior in this case; for he that standeth to his duty, as he hath the better cause, so he hath the greater force, and assuredly will defeat all his opposers?

Art thou, O puffanimous slave, in regard to any creature, thy fellow-subject and servant, afraid of expressing thy loyalty to thy sovereign Lord, thy love to infinite goodness, thy gratitude to thy best friend and kindest benefactor, thy reverence toward the divine majesty, thine awe of uncontrollable power? is this a reasonable, an excusable, a tolerable fear?

Surely if ever to be driven out of heart is reproachful, SERM.
if ever to be cowed doth argue infirmity and abjectness of LXVI.
spirit, it is in this case; when we have all the reason and
obligation in the world to be most courageous and reso-
lute, to fear no colours, to make our party good against
all opposition; when we have the greatest necessity to
engage us, and the greatest advantage to encourage us to
hold out stoutly; the greatest necessity, seeing all that we
have, our life, our salvation, our eternal weal doth lie at
stake; *for it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your* Deut. xxxii.
life: the greatest advantage, for that if we will, we are ^{47.}
invincible, and assured of an easy victory, seeing we take
part with God, and have Omnipotency on our side; so
that we can say with David, *The Lord is my helper, I* Psal. cxviii.
will not fear what man can do unto me: The Lord is my ^{6.}
light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord is the Heb. xliii. 6.
strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Psal. lvi. 11.
xi. 4. xxvii.
1, 3. xlvii. 2.

There is not indeed, to those who are under God's
special protection, and confide in him, any thing in nature
really formidable or terrible: it is his peculiar attribute to
be the mighty and terrible One; he recommendeth him-
self to us as *our fear*, that is, the special object of it; we
therefore do sacrilegiously wrong him, by fearing any
other thing in such cases of competition, and when we are
concerned to fear him; whence then we are prohibited to
fear the greatest powers in the world; *Fear not them*
which kill the body, (if God permit them,) but are not able
to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy
both body and soul in hell. Jer. i. 8.
xx. 11.
Isa. xli. 10.
Gen. xxvi.
24. xv. 1.
Num. xiv.
9. Deut.
xxxii. 8.
2 Chron.
xx. 17.
Jer. v. 22.
x. 7.
Rev. xv. 4.
Deut. vii.
21. x. 17.
xxviii. 58.
Ps. lxxvi. 7.
11. xcix. 3.
Is. viii. 12.
xli. 10.
Matt. x.
26, 28.
Tis i xaxó-
cov;
1 Pet. iii.
13, 14.

Who, saith St. Peter, is he that will (or that can) harm
you, if ye be followers of that which is good?—wherefore
be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanc-
tify the Lord God in your hearts, (by a pure confidence in
him.)

In such cases, we should be ready to accost the greatest
potentates in terms like those of the three brave youths in
Daniel; *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer* Dan. iii. 16,
thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is ^{17, 18.}
able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will

SERM. LXVI. *deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But (however) if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship thy golden image which thou hast set up.* And if, in imitation of so worthy an example, we should defy the wrath of the greatest kings, demanding any sinful compliance from us, how poor a thing is it to fear the displeasure of sorry companions enticing us to the like? how much more should we defy all the crew of hectorly ruffians and huffing braggadocios?

While wicked profane men are so bold and stout in impugning goodness, we should be courageous in defence of
Prov. xxviii. 1. it. The righteous is as bold as a lion.

The fear of God (the which is most reasonable and prudent, and consistent with the bravest courage) should exclude the fear of men; the which is no less vain than base; the which indeed doth involve the wildest boldness, and most rash foolhardiness in the world, pushing us into the most desperate adventures that can be; while by sinning we incense the most dreadful anger, we invade the most formidable power, we incur the most horrible dangers, we run headlong into the jaws of death and hell; such a mixture there is of base cowardice and mad audacity in practices issuing from that principle.

3. Men commonly do neglect the open practice of virtue out of care to decline envy; for ill men seeing others endowed with worthy qualities, which they want; performing good deeds, from which their infirmity or pravity doth hold them averse; entitled to commendations, rewards, and advantages to which they cannot aspire, and whereby they seem to eclipse their credit, or impair their interest, or expose their unworthiness; cannot look on such persons without an *evil eye*, or without conceiving in their heart malevolent grudges at them, which they will be apt to vent in spiteful practices, endeavouring to supplant or blast their virtue; men are apt to envy the favourites of God, as they are of princes. Nor indeed doth any thing more powerfully incite men to hurt their neighbour than such malignity, being edged by that anguish which their fore eye doth feel; to shun which envy, and its mischiev-

Invidiam placare paras virtute relicta? Contemnere miser. Hor. Serm. ii. 3.

ous effects, men commonly are tempted to withdraw its cause, their own virtue, that its bright lustre may not wound the sight of such neighbours. SERM.
LXVI.

But thus to appease envy by deserting virtue is very fond and absurd. For,

Shall I cast away my best goods, because another would not have me to enjoy them? shall I be terribly sick, to cure another's distempered fancy? shall I render myself miserable, because another doth not like to see me happy? because he doth want charity, must I forego innocence? because he doth not love me, shall I hate myself? to please him merely, without bettering him, to ease him of a wholesome smart, shall I displease God, and abuse myself?

Would he not be a silly man, who being envied because he seemeth a favourite of his prince, would, to gratify such enviers, offend his prince? No surely, this is too fond a regard unto any man's base disposition, this is too great a gratification of an enemy's pleasure, this is too slavish a depression of a man's self: rather let him fret, let him torment himself, let him inflict a just punishment on his own uncharitable and unworthy humour; whereby perhaps he may be reduced to discern his folly and correct his fault.

Would any man upon such terms part with his estate, mar his business, slur his reputation, or purposely play the fool? would any man become poor, infamous, or contemptible, because to be rich, to be prosperous, to be honourable, to be wise, are invidious things? Much less should a man upon that account neglect his duty, thereby betraying his soul, discarding the love and favour of God, destroying the satisfaction of his conscience, and forfeiting his hopes of felicity: damages and mischiefs comparable to which all the envy and spite in the world can nowise bring upon him.

If we would avoid envy, we should not do it by incurring a worse evil, and rendering ourselves contemptible for unworthiness; we should rather damp it by modesty, humility, an inoffensive tenour of life.

We should surmount it, and quash it by constant blame-

SERM. less conversation: the which will kill the envious or the
LXVI. envy.

An unquestionable virtue will stop the mouth of detraction, and drive envy into corners, not daring to shew itself against it.

4. A common principle, from whence neglect of duty and commission of sin in visible conversation doth spring, is a fear of infamy and reproach, whereto the strict practice of virtue is liable; men not enduring to bear the odious censures, the foul imputations, the ugly characters, the scurvy epithets, and opprobrious names, wherewith the bold and spiteful enemies of goodness are wont to asperse and brand its faithful adherents.

To be deemed weak, credulous, superstitious, formal, timorous, nice, squeamish, scrupulous, straitlaced, conceited, affected, cross, surly, morose, froward, stubborn, pertinacious, proud.

To be termed a foppish simpleton, doting on speculations and enslaved to rules; a fantastical humourist; a precise bigot, a rigid stoic, a demure sneaksby, a clownish singularist, or nonconformist to ordinary usage, a stiff opiniatre; a man of a pitiful narrow spirit, pent up within a small compass, confined by principles, fettered by laws, living in bondage to his conscience.

These and the like harsh censures, foul reproaches, and abusive scoffs, even all which invention quickened by envy, choler, rancorous spite, and aided by the malicious fiend, can suggest, wherewith the profane crew of men usually do conspire to daub and persecute those who refuse to comply with their unconscionable extravagances and impieties, men can hardly brook; and thence to shun them yield up all, cross their reason, prostitute their conscience, violate all their obligations; choosing rather to be justly reproachable for bad actions, than unjustly reproached for good.

But with such a person, who is thus diverted from his duty, let me expostulate.

Dost thou well to regard what unbridled tongues out of a wanton mind and corrupt heart do sputter and foam?

Psal. lvii.
3, 4.

Shall thy practice depend on their loose wit or licentious talk, so that thou must do nothing which they shall not be in humour to commend ^b? SERM.
LXVI.

Wilt thou renounce all wisdom, abandon thy best interest, forfeit thy happiness, to decline a squib or a flurt ^c?

Would not he be a stark fool, who would be railed or jeered out of his way in travel, out of his business in traffic, out of his estate or real interest upon any occasion? and is he not evidently far more such, who will be flouted out of his duty, out of his salvation, out of any spiritual advantage? Was not the practice of David more advisable, who said, *The proud have had me in derision; yet have I not declined from thy law?* Psal. cxix,
51.

David, a great king, a man of singular courage and gallantry, a glorious hero; yet even him did bold and base people deride. Whom will not profane impudence assail? whom will not they attempt to deter from goodness?

Art thou so blind as not to discern whence it cometh that they disparage virtue? that is, from their extreme vanity and rashness, which move them to speak any thing without consideration or discretion; from their great naughtiness and weakness, their being bewitched with pleasure and besotted with vice, which engageth them to take part so furiously with them; from their malignity and spite against that which crosseth their fond humours and exorbitant lusts; from their pride, which swelleth against those who by contrary practice dissent from their folly, and reprove their wickedness, and eclipse their repute; from their envy, which repineth at thy appearing better and happier than themselves, thy excelling them in true worth, thy enjoying that satisfaction which they want, thy attaining that blessed hope to which they cannot aspire: and seeing that their reproaches do issue from such principles, wilt thou regard them?

Are their words any slander, who being professed ene-

^b Nihil est turpius, quam sapientis vitam ab insipientium sermone pendere. *Cic. de Fin. ii.*

^c Quid de te alii loquantur, ipsi videant. *Scipio apud Cic. in Somn.*

SERM. mies of goodness do naturally impugn it by the readiest
 LXVI. arms they have, a virulent and petulant tongue^d?

Can their dirty language, bespattering good things, alter their nature, or render that dishonourable and odious, which in itself is most excellent, most amiable, most venerable, most useful and profitable^e?

Is it not indeed a commendation of virtue, which should encourage us the more to like it, to honour it, to embrace it, that vain, wild, dissolute persons, distempered in their minds, notoriously void of discretion, of integrity, of sobriety, do pretend to vilify and disgrace it^f?

^a Αφροσύνη.

¹ Pet. ii. 15.

² Αφροσύνη.

³ Theff. iii.

².

^{Ant. iii. §.}

^{4.}

As their commendation is of no worth, so their reproach is less considerable.

Doest thou not disparage thine own judgment by heeding theirs, or suffering it to be of any consideration with thee in the conduct of thy life^g?

Doest thou take them to be serious in this, or to speak in good earnest, when they reproach virtue, and slight the plain dictates of reason, the clear light of natural conscience, the express commands of God, the apparent concerns of their own soul? they who are sober in nothing, how can they be serious in this, why should they seem judicious in such a case^h?

Is it not evidently better to be slandered by giddy, lewd, ungodly wretches, who mind not what they say, nor care what they do, whose judgment therefore can signify nothing; than really to deserve reproof, and thence certainly to incur blame, from all staid, sober, considerate, wise, and virtuous persons, who judge advisedly and uprightly about thingsⁱ?

^d Οὐδὲν φαῦλος τοῖς σπουδαίους ἰσχυροῖν ὑπομένει. *Isid. Pelus. Ep. ii. 320.*

^e (Οὐ γὰρ δοκῶν ἀριστος, ἀλλ' εἶναι θίλω. Τὸ δοκῶν ἔστιν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὡς πρὸς ἑδὶ ὅσας ἀλλότριον. *Greg. Naz. Orat.—de sede Const.*) *Ant. viii. §. 1.*

^f Malis displicere, laudari est. *Sen. Excerpt.*

Non potest bonus non esse, qui bonis placet; nec minus validum argumentum mihi videtur, quod bonus sit si malis displiceat. *Bern. Ep. 248.*

^g Quanta dementia est vereri ne infameris ab infamibus? *Sen. Ep. 91.*

^h Moveret si judicio hoc facerent, nunc morbo faciunt. *Sen. Euc.*

ⁱ Ego cum a nostro Catone laudabar, vel reprehendi me a cæteris facile patiebar. *Cic. de Orat.*

Is it not better to undergo their severest censure and **SERM.**
most biting scoffs, than to be condemned of folly and **LXVI.**
baseness by thy own mind, and reviled by thy own con-
science?

Is it not infinitely better to be unjustly defamed by men,
than to be disreputed by God, exposed to most disgraceful
condemnation at his bar, and thrown into that state of **Dan. xii.**
everlasting ignominy? **2.**

Is it not more tolerable to hear such language, than,
having violated our duty and broken God's commands,
one day to hear that dismal sentence, *Go, ye cursed, into* **Matt. xxv.**
everlasting fire **k 2** **41.**

It is a glorious infamy which one sustaineth for the sake
of righteousness **l**.

Even heathens, with whom glory was the most ample
reward and sweetest fruit of virtue, yet do enjoin that we
should prefer conscience before it; and that we should ra- **Ant. v. §. 3.**
ther gladly embrace infamy than forsake virtue **m.** **xi. 16. ix.**
18.

It is the lot of all good men (for probation, exercise,
and improvement of their virtue) to be persecuted, at least
in some times, as when St. Paul said, *All that will live* **2 Tim. iii.**
godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution: and surely **12.**
he that sincerely loveth God would even desire occasion of **Acts xiv.**
suffering somewhat for his sake, in testimony of his faith- **22.**
ful affection: but what more tolerable persecution, what **Heb. xii. 6.**
more easy martyrdom could we wish, than to be lashed by
a scurrilous tongue; or rather to observe the ears of
others to be infested with the buzzes of detraction? what
is this but a little air stirred in vain, but a mere sound or
blast of wind, importing nought to him that doth not
mind it, or will not be affected with it? the which surely
to a sound heart and pure conscience cannot be very sensi-
ble; a man must have a froward temper, or a tender ear,
whom a little such creaking or grating noise doth much

Quid stul-
tius homine
verba metu-
ente?
Sen. Ep. 91.

k. Tu ergo plus opprobria times quam tormenta? &c. **Bern. Ep. 108.**

l. Æquissimo animo ad honestum consilium per mediam infamiam ten-
dam, &c. **Sen. Ep. 81.**

m. Non vis esse justus sine gloria? at mehercle sæpe justus esse debes cu
infamia. **Sen. Ep. 113.**

SERM. vex; all its force is broken, all its mischief is remedied
LXVI. easily, by neglect or contempt.

It is in a manner more commendable to suffer for being good, than for being a Christian; a truer martyrdom to suffer for the temper, than for the name of Christ; for doing well, than for professing truth.

Who indeed had ever been good, in any notable degree, if some had minded the opinion or the discourse of such men, whom in all times the great adversary of goodness and maligner of our welfare hath excited to deter men from virtue by thus abusing it? hath it not ever been the portion of good men to suffer in this kindⁿ?

Was not our Lord himself, were not his apostles, were not all the prophets of old, were not all the heroes in goodness of all times thus pursued with obloquy? what vile imputation, what name of reproach can be devised, wherewith the spiteful world did not besmear themⁿ?

*Ὁνειδισμῶν
 ἡ δολίχη
 διατριβή
 μου.*

Heb. x. 33.

Abs v. 41.

2 Cor. xii.

10.

*Εὐδοκῶ ἐν
 ὕβρει—*

Matt. v. 11.

Luke vi.

22.

1 Pet. iv.

14.

Yet were they much disturbed at it? were they anywise discouraged or scared by it from their duty? No; they rather did find satisfaction and delight in it; it rather did heighten their mind and strengthen their resolution; it beget a gallant and triumphant disdain of such injuries, enlivening and animating them in their career of duty; they did embrace reproach for righteousness not only with content, as their proper lot and portion from God's providence, but with joy, as their special glory and happiness from divine goodness; feeling it most true what our Master taught: *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Blessed are ye, when men—shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. And,* according to St. Peter, *εὐδοκῶτε, ἰφ' ὅτι ἐβλασφημῆσθε διὰ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου.* If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, (that is for conscionably discharging any Christian duty,) happy are ye; for the spirit of glory

ⁿ Jer. xx. 7. Psal. xliv. 16, 17. lvii. 3, 4. cxix. 51. lxix. 10. Job xii. 4. Wisd. v. 3.

^o *Ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαρίων πύραν ἔλαβον.* Heb. xi. 36. Heb. xii. 3. *Ἀνολογισσάμενοι.* 2 Cor. vi. 8. *Διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας.*

and of God: resteth on you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. SERM.
LXVI.

In fine, it is all reason, and it is the express command of God, that in such cases we should not regard the censures or the reproaches of any mortal; it is a part of duty to despise obloquy, to expose and lose reputation for God's sake. For, *Hearken, saith he, unto me, ye that know* Mt. li. 7, 8. *righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.*

5. Men commonly decline the public practice of duty out of affectation thereby to be deemed more honest and sincere, or to decline the suspicion of being hypocritical.

As this is the most obvious and usual calumny wherewith dissolute people do charge good men; so to men of generous disposition it is of all censures most poignant, as most crossing their temper; according to which as they hate to be, so they can hardly endure to be counted or called dissemblers; whence often they choose rather to seem indifferent to goodness, than zealously affected to it; they rather wave some points of duty, than, for the performance of them, expose themselves to that imputation.

But this proceeding is very unreasonable. For,

What can be more absurd, than to be really and notoriously bad, (as whoever omitteth his duty is,) to prevent a surmise of being such? or to be truly worse than we should be, that we may not be deemed worse than we seem?

How can we more gratify the enemy of our salvation, than by approving ourselves in truth to be what he would falsely challenge us to be, mockers of God, and traitors to our own soul?

Is it not a vain thing to regard that kind of censure which it is impossible for any man to escape, upon other terms than of being very naughty? for wicked men will never fail to load those with this charge, who will not comply with their follies, and *run with them to the same excess* of 1 Pet. iv. 4.

SERM. *riot*, or are anywise better than themselves ; it is inevitable
 LXVI. for a staunch man not to be stigmatized for a hypocrite by
 them.

2 Cor. i. 12. We have certainly more reason to be satisfied with the
 1 John iii. sure conscience and sense of our own integrity, than to be
 21. moved with the presumptuous assertions of any wretch
 devoid of justice or charity : his censure, being plainly in-
 jurious and contrary to all rules of equity, which prescribe
 that no man should judge of things unknown or uncertain,
 is utterly despicable.

1 John iii. The testimony of God, (*who is greater than our hearts,*)
 20. perfectly knowing our sincerity, may abundantly support
 1 Theff. ii. us ; it is a great wrong to him for us to value the rash
 4. suspicions of men, when we are secure of his knowledge,
 Gal. i. 10. who *seeth all our works, and trieth our hearts* ; who hath
 Col. iii. 23. said, *that if we commit our way to him, and trust in him,*
 Eph. vi. 5. *he will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our*
 1 Cor. iv. *judgment as the noonday.*
 4.
 Pf. xxxvii. 5, 6.

It is certainly better to be called hypocrite by men for
 doing our duty, than to be treated as a hypocrite by God
 for neglecting it ; for all those who upon any account do
 violate God's laws, shall *have their portion with the hypo-*
 Matt. xxiv. *crites in that disconsolate place, where is weeping and*
 51. *gnashing of teeth.* And good reason ; for indeed by thus
 avoiding hypocrisy, we really do incur it ; by seeking to
 preserve an opinion of sincerity, we forfeit the reality of
 it ; by the practice of disavowing the fear of God and care
 of goodness, we do constitute ourselves certain hypocrites
 and impostors ; dissembling our thoughts, smothering our
 conscience, deluding our neighbours with false conceits of
 us, feigning that indifference which we have not, pretend-
 ing to act without regret or remorse, which we cannot
 do ; seeming otherwise than we are, signifying otherwise
 than we mean, doing otherwise than we judge fit, or like
 to do ; that is, if we be not stark infidels, or utterly void
 of conscience.

This is hypocrisy turned the wrong side outward, dis-
 guising a man in a fouler shape, and uglier garb, than that
 which is natural and true.

And if we compare the two hypocrisies, (that of pre-
tending conscience which we want, and this of denying
conscience which we have; that of seeming better than
we are, this of seeming worse than we may be,) this in
nature may well seem more vile, in tendency more dan-
gerous, in effect more mischievous than the other.

SERM.
LXVI.

There is in both the same falsehood, the same prevari-
cation, the like contempt and abuse of God; but the hy-
pocrite of whom we speak doeth worse things, more di-
rectly wrongful to God, more prejudicial to goodness,
more harmful to the world.

The specious hypocrite, counterfeiting goodness, and
*having a form of godliness, without the power and reality
of it*, doth yield to God some part (the exterior part) of
his due honour and respect; but the sneaking hypocrite,
disowning goodness, doth apparently desert, slight, and
affront God: the one serveth God with his face and his
voice, though *his heart be far from him*; the other doth
not so much as sacrifice a carcase of obedience to him:
that may bring some credit and advantage to goodness,
strengthen its interest by his vote and countenance; this
by not avowing it doth assuredly weaken its reputation and
cause: that hypocrisy, as such, is a private and single evil,
whereby a man doth indeed prejudice himself, but doth
not injure his neighbour, yea, may edify him by the ap-
pearing (which in this respect is the same with the real)
goodness of his example; but this hypocrisy is a gene-
ral mischief, a scandalous evil, a contagious pestilence,
whereby a man not only harmeth himself, but wrongeth
many others, seducing them into dissoluteness, infecting
the world with base indifference to good, and easiness to
comply with sin.

It is indeed a sad thing, that God and goodness should
be deserted upon this account; that most men should be
so uncharitable, so unjust, so imprudent, as to suspect all
good men of hypocrisy; as if it were incredible that any
man should heartily love or fear God, (when it is rather
strange that any man should do otherwise;) that any man
in good earnest, or otherwise than in pretence and for

SERM. finifter respects, should embrace virtue, (when it is marvelous that a reasonable man should decline it;) that so many, of themselves inclinable to goodness, should be so weak as to be deterred from it by so vain an apprehension; and that the name of hypocrisy should drive away piety; that it should become desirable, that hypocrites might abound in the world, lest religion both in truth and shew should be discarded.

In fine, we may otherwise suppress this odious imputation than by deserting goodness; we may demonstrate ourselves serious and sincere by an inflexible adherence to it in the continual tenor of our practice; and especially in some instances of duty, which are hardly consistent with hypocrisy: for no man can hold long in a strained posture; no man will take much pains, or encounter great difficulties, or sustain grievous hardships and afflictions, cross his appetites, forego gains and honours, for that which he doth not heartily like and love: he may counterfeit in ceremonies and formalities, but he will hardly feign humility, meekness, patience, contentedness, temperance, at least uniformly and constantly. Even the patient enduring this censure will confute it, and wipe off the aspersions of hypocrisy.

Matt. xxiii.
23.

SERMON LXVII.

PROVIDE THINGS HONEST IN THE SIGHT OF
ALL MEN.

2 COR. viii. 21.

*Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the
Lord, but also in the sight of men.*

6. **ANOTHER** great impediment of good conversation **SERM.**
before men is a desire of seeming courteous and civil. **LXVII.**
Men usually conform to sinful practices, because they
would not be held clowns, rude and distasteful in conver-
sation; they would not give offence to their company, by
clashing with their humour; by preferring their own
judgment, and seeming to be in their own conceit wiser
and better than those with whom they converse; by pro-
voking them to think they are held fools or worse, by
such non-compliance.

This is an ordinary snare to easy and ingenuous natures;
but the ground of it is very unreasonable: for although
in matters of indifference, where duty and sin do not fall
into consideration, to be limber and ductile as can be,
(which is the temper of the best metal,) to have no hu-
mour of our own, or to resign up all our humour to the
will of our company, to condescend unto, and comport
with any thing; to raise no faction or debate, but pre-
sently to yield to the swaying vote; to *become all things*
to all men in a ready complaisance, be wisdom and good
manners, doth argue good nature, good understanding,
good breeding; is a rightly gentle and obliging quality:

SERM. Yet where duty is concerned, where sinning or not sinning is the case, there courtesy hath no room; there it is vain to pretend any engagement to complaisance.

For surely it is better to be held uncivil, than to be ungodly; it is far better manners to offend any number of men, than to be rude with God, to clash with his pleasure, to offer indignity and injury to him: there can be no competition in the case; no shadow of reason, why we should displease God to please men.

As it were more civil to offend ten thousand boors (peasants) than to affront our king; so to offend ten thousand kings than to affront our God were in policy more advisable, and in equity more justifiable: so the royal Psal. cxix. 28. Psalmist did judge; for, *Princes, said he, did sit and speak against me, but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes*: so Matt. x. 18. Moses, so Samuel, so Elias, so Jeremy, so Daniel, so the three noble children, so the holy Apostles did conceive; who being persons otherwise very courteous and gentle, yet had not that consideration of mighty princes, as not rather to approve their consciences to God, than to comply with their pleasure; how much less should we, upon pretence of courtesy toward inferior persons in ordinary conversation, transgress our duty?

Our own interest in such cases is too considerable to be sacrificed to the conceit or pleasure of any men: our salvation is no matter, wherein formality of respect should intervene, or have any weight; to gain or forfeit our eternal happiness is no business of compliment or ceremony: it were a silly courtesy for a man to wait on his company to hell, a wild point of gallantry to be damned in complaisance.

Who would take himself to be obliged in good manners to hold on the round in a cup of poison; to leap down after those, who, from blind inadvertency, or wilful perverseness, tumble into a gulf, to gash or stab himself in conformity to some desperate folk? Much less can a man be engaged out of any such regard (in compliance with the mistake, weakness, or pravity of others) to incur guilt, to provoke divine wrath, to expose his soul to utter ruin,

to undergo a damage, for which all the world cannot make any reparation or amends?

Is it not far better to disgust than to gratify those, who have so little consideration of our welfare; who indeed are very discourteous and heinously rude in offering to tempt us unto sin, to desire a compliance therein with them; to expect from us, that we should adventure so much for their vain satisfaction?

Indeed to gratify such persons were great and noble courtesy: but really to do it, we should not go this way; for this is a spurious courtesy, rather conspiracy and treachery, than courtesy.

It is in truth, at the bottom, great discourtesy (involving much unkindness, real abuse, unmerciful inhumanity and cruelty) to second, to countenance, to support or encourage any man in doing that which manifestly tendeth unto his great prejudice, to his utter bane.

It is the truest civility (implying real humanity, genuine charity, faithful kindness, and tender pity) to stand off in such cases, and, by refusing (in a modest, gentle, discreet manner refusing) to concur in sin with our friends and companions, to check them, to warn them, to endeavour their amendment and retreat from pernicious courses; to exercise that *compassion* toward them, which St. Jude calleth *pulling them out of the fire*.

Jud. 22, 23.

In such cases to repel them, yea to reprove them, is the greatest favour we can shew them; it is not only safe for ourselves, but kind to them to observe St. Paul's precept, *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*, Eph. v. 11, *but rather reprove them*; for which deportment, whenever they come to themselves, and soberly reflect on things, they will thank and bless us; and it will happen as the Wise Man saith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with his tongue*.

Prov. xxviii.
23.

In fine, if we thoroughly scan the business, we shall find that commonly it is not abundance of courtesy, but a defect of charity, or of conscience, or of courage, which disposeth us to reservedness, or to concurrence upon such occasions, in regard to unallowable practices.

SERM. LXVII. 7. Another snare which catcheth and holdeth us in open practice of sin, or neglect of duty, is deference to the opinion, authority, custom, or example of others; to the common opinion, to the authority of great and leading persons, to the fashion of the world, and prevalent humour of the age.

A man (not consulting or not confiding in his own reason) is apt to credit the vogue, to defer a kind of veneration to the general sentiments of men, (especially of men qualified,) apprehending that allowable or tolerable, which men commonly by their practice seem to approve. He is prone to suspect his own judgment of mistake, when it doth thwart the opinion of so many; and hardly can have the heart to oppose his single apprehension against so common notions.

—illos De-
fendit nu-
merus—
Juv. Sat.
ii. 45.

The commonness of sin, and multitude of offenders, doth in a manner authorize and warrant it, doth at least seem to excuse and extenuate it.

Ecclus. xvi.
17.

A man easily conceiteth himself safe enough, while he is in the herd, while he walketh in the road, when he hath the broad coverlet of general usage to shroud him from blame: he doth at least fancy consolation in undergoing a doom with so many.

But upon many accounts, this is a very fallacious and dangerous ground of practice.

Ant. ix. 18.
xi. 3, 4.

For multitudes are no good authors of opinion, or guides of practice.

Argumen-
tum pessimi
turba. *Sen.*
de Vit. b. 2.

Wise men have ever been apt to suspect that to be bad, which is most commonly admired and affected.

Nothing is more vulgarly noted, than the injudiciousness, the blindness, the levity, temerity, and giddiness of the vulgar; temper, inclination, appetite, interest, and the like perverting biases, have most sway on them; any specious appearance, any slight motive, any light rumour doth serve to persuade them any thing, to drive them any whither.

All ages have deplored the paucity of wise and good men; the genuine disciples of our Lord, and *fans of wisdom* have ever been *paucissimi grati, a small flock*; our Lord

hath told us, that *Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.* SERM. LXVII.

Wherefore popular use is no good argument of truth or right; nor can yield any warrant or any colour for infringing God's law: no *plebiscitum* can be of force against it. Matt. vii. 13.
Luke xiii. 24.
Rom. ix. 27.
1f. x. 29.

God never did allow the people to exempt themselves or us from their loyalty, or obedience to his laws; they are universally obligatory; he hath *commanded all men to repent*; he hath threatened that otherwise *all shall perish*; and that *tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul of man that doeth evil.* Acts xvii. 30.
Luke xiii. 3.
Rom. ix. 12.
Rom. ii. 9.

He by exprefs prohibitions hath obviated all such pretences and pleas; *Thou shalt not, saith he, follow a multitude to do evil*; and, *Say ye not a confederacy—neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid*, (fear not to dissent and difcost from the way of this people.) And, *If sinners entice thee*, (how many soever they be, though it be a *sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers*,) *canst thou not.* Exod. xxiii. 2.
Rom. xii. 2.
Be not conformed to this world.
1f. viii. 11.
1 John ii. 15.
Love not the world.
1f. viii. 10.
Prov. i. 10.
1fa. i. 4.

Indeed if we consider it, it is so far from excusing sin, that it is an aggravation thereof, that we therein conspire with others, and the more the worse: to oppose God singly is not quite so criminal, as to join with a rout in hostility and rebellion against him; for hereby God's authority is more shaken, and his honour more rudely violated; hereby we do not only sin ourselves, but contribute to the sin of others, encourage them to it, and uphold them in it by our patronage.

Hereby we become accessary to the degeneracy and general apostasy of the age.

Hereby we do join our forces to pull down God's judgments on our country, and by promoting general corruption induce general vengeance.

The multitude of sinners is so far from sheltering any one from wrath, that it surely draweth it upon all; forcing the Almighty not only for the assertion of his own authority, and vindication of his honour, but for the good

SERM. of the people, and *purgation* of the world, to pour forth LXVII. remarkable vengeance.

Isa. i. 25. For example; In the time of Noah did God spare the I will purge old world, when all flesh had corrupted its way upon the away the earth, did that stave off God's wrath, or stop the deluge? dross.
Gen. vi. 12. No, it did grievously provoke him, it did in a manner ne-
2 Pet. ii. 5. cessitate him to destroy man from the face of the earth;
Gen. vi. 7. bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.
2 Pet. ii. 5.

Did the number of finners in Sodom prevent vengeance
2 Pet. ii. 6. on them? was it not that which did condemn them to an overthrow so dismal, pulling down fire and brimstone on them?

What was the reason of that woful captivity, into
Jer. vi. 28. which Israel was carried? was it not because they were all grievous revolters; and had so generally conspired in
Jer. v. 1. wickedness, that the Prophet could say, Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it? Was it not this, which
Jer. v. 29. did wring from God that sentence, Shall I not visit for these things? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

When the case is such in any community, as it was in
Isa. i. 6. Israel, when God said, From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it, then judgment is necessary, and it must assuredly follow, Your country is desolate—then God, his patience being tired, and his goodness unsupportably abused, will cry out, Ah, I will ease me of my adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.
Isa. i. 7.
Isa. i. 24.

God as Governor of the world in discharge of his office, for clearing his honour, for assuring his majesty, out of regard to public good, for the safety and welfare of his subjects, is concerned to chastise notorious, scandalous, and infectious sin: he may reserve private sins for the final
1 Cor. iv. doom, when the hidden things of darkness shall be brought
15. to light, and the counsels of hearts manifested, and all things shall receive just reward and recompense; but it is expedient to punish public sins publicly: they who

declare their sin as Sodom, with outrageous impudence, SERM. LXVII.
are like to find a punishment like that in a common vengeance. Iſa. iii. 9.

We should therefore in such a case be the more careful of our conversation, more shy of sinful compliance with others, for preventing public calamity; for that our single piety and innocence (or the goodness of a few) may save our country, together with ourselves, from wrath and ruin; seeing it is the gracious method of God in regard to a few righteous men to spare the rest, to release a nation from deserved punishment; for if in Sodom had been found ten righteous persons, it had escaped that horrible destruction; and Israel in Hezekiah's time (although in Gen. xviii. 32. a very great and general corruption of that age) by a few good men did avoid the like doom; according to that of the Prophet, *Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom.* Iſa. i. 9. Lam. iii. 22.

The righteousness of one Noah did save the race of mankind from being extinct.

The zeal of one Phinehas did stop that plague, which had devoured Israel: *Phinehas, saith God himself, the son of Num. xxv. Eleazar, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.* Pſal. cvi. 30.

If there had been such another public patron of piety, at the time when Israel was so severely punished by deliverance into captivity, it would have obstructed that lamentable event; God himself so testified; for, *I sought, said he, for a man among them, that would make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them:—and, Run ye to Jer. v. 1. and fro, (said he again,) seek if ye can find a man—in Jerusalem,—and I will pardon it.* Ezek. xxi. 30, 31.

Wherefore, beside regard to our own welfare, a consideration of public good, charity toward the world, a compassion of our country should withhold us from conspiring in common transgressions, or omissions of duty.

If we sin with all, we must suffer with all; nor will the

SERM. LXVII. having so much company in suffering yield any true comfort to us: *Socios habuisse doloris* (to have companions in sorrow) is in itself a pitiful solace, and an unworthy one, favouring of inhuman malignity; for our fellows will bear no share with us, or take off any thing from the burden of our pains, which will be equally to them and us extreme.

God will
not oversee
us. Ecclus.
xvi. 17.

Can it be any considerable satisfaction, that we are sick of an epidemical disease, that sweepeth away multitudes about us and with us?

Is it better for one part, that the whole body is overspread with a noisome leprosy? that its fellow members are tortured with grievous anguish?

Can the sorest pains of our brethren cure the aching of our heart, assuage the pangs of our conscience, or slack the consuming flames beneath?

What advantage can we enjoy from going down to hell in a troop? what ease shall we find there from being encompassed with the doleful groans, the piercing shrieks, and dismal howlings of fellow sufferers in that infernal dungeon?

Alas! will it not rather augment our pains to hear the sore complaints, the fierce accusations, the desperate curses of those, whom our compliance hath engaged, or encouraged, or confirmed and hardened in that wicked practice, which did throw them into that disconsolate case?

8. Another principle (near of kin to the former) is a dislike of singularity and solitude; together with the consequences and imputations usually cleaving thereto.

One would not be a man by himself; to be gazed on, to be hooted at as a kind of prodigy, to be deemed an extravagant, odd, humorous, fantastic person, conceited of his own opinion, addicted to his own way, arrogating to himself a liberty of crossing and condemning or condemning the world; therefore he runneth along with the age, complying with its sinful customs, and naughty fashions.

* He is grievous unto us even to behold: for his life is not like other men's, his ways are of another fashion. Widd. ii. 15, &c.

But this is a vain principle; for really to be singular is no fault, to be held so is no disgrace; it is rather in many cases laudable and honourable; and if in any, most reasonably it is in this. SERM.
LXVII.

Doth not singularity or paucity increase the price and estimation of every valuable thing? What maketh a jewel but rarity? what but that maketh a diamond more precious than a pebble?

Do not men for singular eminency in any art, skill, faculty, endowment, gain credit and renown? What recommended to posterity the names of Apelles, Praxiteles, Phidias, but excelling in their art beyond the ordinary rate? what gave to Demosthenes and Cicero their esteem, but a singular knack of eloquence? to what did Alexander and Cæsar owe their fame, but to an extraordinary valour? whence got Socrates such a name, but from his singular wisdom? whence Fabricius, Aristides, Cato, but from their singular integrity?

Why then should it be a discouragement or reproach to be singular or extraordinary in the noblest of all faculties, that of living well, in the most excellent of all perfections, that of virtue?

In truth a man is hardly capable of a greater commendation than this, that he is singularly good; that he surpasseth the vulgar level, and mounteth near heaven in the divinest qualities; that no bad example or fashion hath been able to seduce or corrupt him: this should render him to be most highly esteemed, and most dearly cherished, as a choice ornament of the world, as a most useful instrument of good to mankind.

It were desirable that virtue were more common in the world; but surely its being more rare doth render it more admirable, more illustrious, more glorious.

Heroical virtue is therefore such, because so few do attain or can reach it;

—pauci quos æquus amavit

Jupiter;

A few, who by special assistance of God's grace, and by

SERM. extraordinary resolution, do surmount the obstacles which
 LXVII. are set against it.

It was well said of St. Bernard, *To be good among good men hath safety, but to be such among bad men hath also praise*; (a man will be saved by that, but he should be commended for this;) *that hath as much facility as it hath security, this is of as much worth as difficulty*^b.

Indeed if we consider the nature of things, or consult the history of times, we shall find that virtue must be, and ever hath been, liable to this imputation; it is commonly so hard and hazardous to be good in any notable degree, that few will take the pains, or undergo the hardships requisite to attain or exercise it.

Hence the best men (who are such, not according to the blind conjecture of men, but in God's sure esteem)
 1 Pet. ii. 9. are an elect, and peculiar sort of people, a few choice persons culled out of a great lump of those, who either reject religion, or embrace it only in verbal profession or formal shew.

Hence it hath been the observation, and complaint of all times,

Juv. Sat.
 xiii. 28.

Rari quippe boni.

Hence the most renowned men for goodness, and who by God's special care have been recommended to us as patterns thereof, have been very singular in it; and their singularity did much enhance the price of their goodness.

Gen. v. 22. It is said of Enoch, that *he walked with God*; but it seemeth with small or no company beside; otherwise it would not have been so particularly recorded of him.

Noah was content to be a man by himself, *a preacher of righteousness* against the vogue, and a practiser thereof
 Gen. vii. 1. against the stream of his whole age; for *thee* (said God of him, that is, thee alone) *have I seen righteous before me in this generation*. He was no less singular in his goodness, than in his salvation.

^b Inter bonos, bonus esse salutem habet, inter malos vero et laudem; illud tantæ facilitatis est, quanta et securitatis; hoc tantæ virtutis, quanta et difficultatis. *Bern. Ep. 25.*

Abraham had no common qualities, which moved God SERM. LXVII. to pick him out, and separate him from the rest of mankind, (to single him from his kindred and country) to confer special graces and blessings on him. Gen. xii. 1.

Lot had his righteous soul vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; which did inclose him, yet so that he did retain a sound and clear integrity among them. 2 Pet. ii. 7.

Job had this testimony from God, examining Satan concerning him, *Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?* Jobi. 8.

What was the resolution of Joshua? did he value being sole or singular in his practice? No; for, propounding to his people whether they would choose God or not, he told them that however it were, although all of them should forsake God, he was resolved to stick fast to him, not regarding their practice; *But, said he, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord:* that indeed was nobly resolved; it was a resolution worthy of such an hero, to stand alone in so good and wise a choice against his whole nation. It was a resolution suitable to that his behaviour, which he expressed in these words, *My brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord my God;* in regard to which his comrade Caleb, being of the same spirit with him, is called a man of another spirit; different from, and above the mean spirit of his fellows. Josh. xxiv. 15. Josh. xiv. 8. Numb. xiv. 24.

What was David? was he not a man by himself? was he not like one, of whom the poet saith,

*Egregium sanctumque virum si cerno, bimembri
Hoc monstrum puero, vel fœtæ comparo mulæ?*

Juv. Sat. xiii.

So he telleth us, *I, saith he, am become as it were a monster unto many, but my sure trust is in thee.*

* A wonder N. Tr. Psal. lxxi. 7. cxix. 51. 1 Pet. iv. 4. 1 Kings xix. 10.

Did Elias, to shun the imputation of singularity, or in regard to common practice, swerve from his faithful adherence to God's service, although he did passionately resent, and bewail his case? No, for *I have, said he, been very jealous for the Lord of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and*

SERM. *slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.*

LXVII. *What was the case of Jeremy? I, saith he, was a derision to all my people, and their song all the day: yet did he maintain his integrity, and was a defended city, and an iron pillar, and a brazen wall against the whole land; against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, and against the people of the land.*

What was the condition of our Lord? was not he crucified? $\mu\alpha\iota\omicron\nu$ ἀντιλεγόμενον, a prodigy spoken against by all; against whom both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together; who trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him; who in his life was regarded by few, and at his death (when he yielded his great attestation to truth and righteousness) was deserted by all?

What was the Apostles' condition? were they not singular men? were not they held a sect, everywhere spoken against, and impugned with all violence of spirit and rage? were not they made a spectacle to the world, to be gazed at, with scorn and reproach? did not they (a few, simple, poor, weak folk) in doctrine and practice cross and control the world, confuting, reproving, condemning the generality of men, of error, of folly, of wickedness?

It can therefore be no just blame or reasonable discouragement to appear singular in the practice of virtue.

Such a singularity is no good argument of fond conceitedness, of wilful humour, of arrogant pride. For,

Can it be fond conceitedness to follow the dictates of the best reason, to observe the advices of the wisest men in all times, to follow the direction and conduct of infinite wisdom; to embrace that, which in most cases natural light, common sense, and continual experience do approve? is it not wildness to do otherwise, though all should do it?

Can it be wilful humour to hold fast our best interest, our truest comfort, our eternal salvation? is it not rather so, to comply with a perverse generation in running headlong to their own ruin?

Can it be pride or arrogance to acknowledge our **SERM.**
Maker, to be loyal and dutiful to our heavenly Sovereign, **LXVII.**
to fear the Almighty God, to submit to his will, to trem-
ble at his word, to be afraid of his judgments, to shun his
fierce anger and severe vengeance?

Is it a bad ambition to seek that honour and immortal
glory which God doth offer, to shun that everlasting
shame and contempt which he doth menace?

Is it not rather monstrous presumption and enormous
vanity to consort and conspire with rebels against God's
law, with despisers of his grace?

In fine, when the most men are foolish and vain, when
the world is depraved and dissolute, it is necessary that the
best reason should be called humour, and the wisest men
should be deemed extravagant; that the best things should
be slighted, and the best persons represented with odious
characters: but hence to renounce wisdom and goodness is
abominably absurd; as if we should therefore put out our
light, because it is night about us, or in deep winter
should put off our clothes among the wild Indians.

9. Of affinity to the foregoing principles is this most
plausible apology for smothering our conscience, namely,
a prudential apprehension, that we shall not come off well
in openly avowing and abetting goodness, so as to do any
good or service to it thereby; but shall thereby rather
work prejudice and disservice to it.

The age (will such a wise man say) is incorrigibly de-
generate; wickedness is not only bold and impudent, but
even outrageously insolent; so that to appear strictly good
is a kind of scandal, to pretend conscience for our rule of
action is to be ridiculous, to patronize duty is to provoke **Job xii. 4.**
scorn and obloquy, to mention religion is to prostitute and
profane it, to concern God in our doing is to expose his
most sacred and venerable name to irrisión and foul abuse.

Such is the posture of things, that of all the sects and
factions which divide the world, that of Epicurean scorn-
ers and mockers is become the most formidable; with
disdainful pride insulting and vapouring over the professors

SERM. of religion, persecuting all soberness of mind and staunch-
 LXVII. nefs of manners with a fierce rage and a kind of satanic
 zeal:

The state of the world being like to that when the
 Pſal. xciv. holy Pſalmist cried out, *Lord, how long shall the wicked,*
 3, 4. *how long shall the wicked triumph? how long shall they*
 lii. 1. x. 3. *utter and speak hard things, and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?*

In such a case, is it not seasonable to observe our Lord's
 Matt. vii. 6. advice, *not to give that which is holy unto dogs, nor to cast our pearls before swine*; (not to expose good doctrine and holy practice to scurrilous and sensual people, who will snarl and bark at it, will scorn and trample on it, will bite and tear you for it?)

Is it not then wisdom rather fairly to retreat, withdrawing our virtue into a safe retirement, than by openly contesting for it against overmatching forces to hazard its being baffled and abused, its being trampled on and triumphed over, by scornful pride and malice?

In such a world to oppose impiety, what is it but attempting to stop a torrent, to allay a storm, to gape against an oven, to blow against the wind, to kick against the pricks?

But if this case be rightly weighed, it rather strongly may engage us to an open profession and practice of the strictest virtue, than excuse us from it.

Eph. v. 15. St. Paul doth enjoin us *to walk accurately, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time*, for this reason, *because the*
 Phil. ii. 15. *days are evil*; and *that we should be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, shining among them as lights in the*
 * (or holding fast, *world, and * holding forth the word of life.*
 EPH. v. 15.)

And great reason for it; for the worse the world is, the more need there is of good patterns to instruct and guide it, to admonish and excite it to goodness.

If the days are evil, it is high time that we should apply our best endeavours to the mending of them.

If virtue be so near lost, or so quite gone from among

us, it is needful that we should presently seek to recover or to retrieve it^c. SERM.
LXVII.

If goodness be so hardly pressed by opposition, then hath every good man the more reason to appear strenuously in its defence, the more are we engaged to hasten with all our might to its relief and succour from irrecoverable oppression.

Every one should labour to raise a bank against that inundation, which threateneth to overflow and overwhelm all.

Shall we endure to see the adversary of our welfare to carry all before him without any opposition or obstruction? Shall we suffer iniquity to enjoy a quiet reign, to root and settle itself in its usurpation, to raise itself a title of long occupancy and prescription against goodness?

Is it not then more generous to avow our friendship to virtue, and to abet it in our patronage, when it is under the hatches, and crieth for our aid? is it not vile treachery in such a case to desert it?

Is it not gallant then *to resist sin*, and check wickedness, when it is so high and rampant?

Who will not be virtuous (or endeavour at least to appear such) when virtue is in fashion and request; when it flourisheth in reputation, when all the world doth countenance and abet it? who will not shun or disown wickedness, when it is commonly odious and despicable? who will *not help the Lord against* weak adversaries.

Judg. v. 23.

But to embrace virtue upon greatest disadvantages, to disclaim vice in its triumphant prosperity, this is indeed brave and masculine.

He is a worthy man indeed who can keep the field among so many stout enemies, who can stand upright *in a crooked generation*; who can despise the scorn, defy the rage, bear up against the impudence and malignity of vain, base, wretched men, combining to supplant and extirpate goodness.

Nor have we reason in proceeding thus to despair of

^c *Spēcta juvenis—in ea tempora natus es, quibus formare animum expediat constantibus exemplis. Tac. Ann. 16.*

SERM. LXVII. good success; we need not fear thereby to expose the credit, or endanger the interest of goodness. For,

How can we fail of prospering in the maintenance of God's cause and special concern? Although men may commonly desert him, yet doth he not utterly forsake them, or give over the government of the world; he may let the reins lie a little loose, but he doth not put them out of his hands; his power cannot be abated, his providence can never sleep; though he is so patient in suffering wicked men to provoke him, yet he will not be *slack* in assisting good men, who take his part, and undertake to maintain his honour; assuredly he will help them, who *help him against the mighty.*

Deut. xxxii. In this service *one will chase a thousand, and two put ten*
 30. *thousand to flight*; one David will knock down never so
 Josh. xxiii. many Philistines reproaching God's name; one Phinehas
 10. will repress the petulancy of a whole nation; one Jeremy
 Num. xxv. 3. shall be *a brazen wall against a whole land*; God will
 Jer. xv. 20. make it good to such an one, *They shall fight against thee,*
 Jer. i. 19. *but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee,*
 xx. 11. *saith the Lord, to deliver thee.*

One sober man in defence of virtue is able to discomfit all the Hectors, the huffing blades, and boisterous ruffians in the world, attacking them with sound discretion and steady resolution: for all their bravery and confidence, they are easily mated; and being like their fire, if you *resist them, they will flee from you*: a prudent, seasonable, smart check will quash their spurious courage and giddy audacity. Their contempt of goodness is but feigned; they cannot really for their hearts despise it; there is stamped on their souls and consciences such a respect, such an awe thereof, which they cannot quite rase out: wherefore if you briskly represent it to them, and challenge their reverence to it, they cannot but succumb, their own mind and conscience joining to back your reproof; so that if you cannot reclaim them, you shall however repress them; if you cannot correct their vice, you shall yet confound their impudence; For so, saith St. Peter, *it is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the*

Jam. iv. 7.
 Jer. xx. 11.
 1 Pet. ii. 15.

ignorance of foolish men; and, Having a good conscience, **SERM.**
 that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they **LXVII.**
 may be ashamed that falsely accuse your conversation in 1 Pet. iii.
 16.
 Tit. ii. 8.
 Christ.

It is only sneaking, or a timorous pretence to virtue, which they contemn; but they will admire those who stiffly adhere to it, and stoutly maintain it.

We shall therefore expose virtue, not by frankly avowing it, but by faintly slinking from it, when occasion requireth an open acknowledgment and exemplary practice of it.

If the world is so very bad, it will not be worse for our attempt to better it; it will be so much at least better, that one therein hath that worthy purpose.

It was bad, when Noah preached righteousness to it.

It was bad, when Elias was so zealous for the Lord of hosts.

It was bad, when Jeremy was derided for declaring God's will and exhorting to repentance.

They were very bad times, when all the Prophets did strive so earnestly to reclaim men from their wickedness; being reproached and persecuted for doing so, but not deterred from doing it: the resentment they had of the badness of times did not make them abandon the means of its recovery from it.

The whole world did lie in wickedness when the Apostles 1 John v.
 19.
 did undertake the reformation of it.

In fine, if men generally upon such accounts of despair- None call-
 eth for jus-
 tice, nor
 any plead-
 eth for
 truth—
 Isa. lix. 4.
 ing prudence neglect to own goodness, what must the consequence be? what, but that piety shall be cashiered, that virtue shall be discarded, that conscience shall be quite exploded and exterminated from the world? that consequently an horrible deluge of various mischiefs, a general prevalence of lewdness and luxury, of fraud and violence, of faction and tumult, a violation of all faith and friendship, a dissolution of all order and peace will ensue?

And what must grow upon this state of things? what but another flood of judgments, and woful vengeance?

SERM. LXVII. when God's patience hath been tried to the utmost, and his goodness tired with bearing such a load of abominations, he will be forced to cry out, *Shall I not visit for these things? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*

Jer. v. 29.
Isa. i. 24.
lix. 17.

Stulta caliditas, perverse imitata prudentiam.
Cic. de Off.
iii. p. 143.

10. Another principle of dispensing with conscience in public duties and conversation before men, is a kind of perverse wisdom, or subtle craft, affecting the name of discretion.

Men see there are divers inconveniences attending the profession of respect to God and conscience in all their doings; that the world may dislike and disesteem them, that divers persons will hate, malign, reproach, and persecute them for it; that they may chance to be crossed in their designs, and lose profits or preferments thereby; therefore they deem it advisable to decline it in open view, making up the defect by adoring and serving God in private.

Thus they think to save all, by maintaining a neutrality, and compounding the business, yielding an open conformity to the world, and reserving a secret regard to God; finning publicly, and privately repenting; retaining their credit, quiet, ease, pleasure, with their conscience and peace of mind; affecting some piety, but avoiding the scandal of it.

Gal. v. 11.

They would hold fair with both sides; so that neither the world should persecute them for crossing its humour, nor God punish them for transgressing his will.

They drive a subtle trade, hoping to gain on all hands, both the benefits of the other, and the advantages of this world; to save their soul, and serve their worldly interests together:

Eccles. vii.
16, 17.

This they would believe a point of special wisdom, prescribed by Solomon: *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyself overwise; for why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before the time?*

But this rooking trick, to hedge thus and save stakes, to play fast and loose, to dodge and shuffle with God, God doth not like, nor will suffer himself to be gulled with it.

He will not be satisfied with such a mongrel, partial, **SERM.**
and halting service. **LXVII.**

He will not allow us to withhold that half of his service ^{1 Kings xviii. 21.}
(the external, visible part thereof) which is most honour-
able to him, and most beneficial to our neighbour.

He cannot endure a double heart, or a double face; one
looking upward to heaven, another downward to the earth^c.

He exacteth from us an integrity of heart and perfec-
tion of obedience; that we should love him with our
whole heart, that we should be *perfect with him*, that we
should walk uprightly, not *deflecting to the right hand or
left* from our duty.

He will not endure that we should hold amity or cor-
respondence with his enemies; particularly with the world,
the friendship whereof he hath declared inconsistent with
his favour; and that it is a spiritual adultery to impart any
of our affections to it; according to that of St. James;

*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friend- Jam. iv. iii.
ship of the world is enmity with God? so that whosoever 1 John ii.
will be a friend of the world becometh the enemy of God.* 15.

We may shift as well as we can in the world, provided <sup>Kαθίσταται.
(John xv. 19. xvii. 14.)
Pf. xxxviii. xxxviii.
O. Tr. Phil. ii. 5.</sup>
that we hold innocence, and do not conspire with it
against God, by violation of our duty to him^f: *Be wise
as serpents, innocent as doves.* Matt. x. 16. (as lambs,
Luke x. 3.)

They reproach good men as superstitious; who are
afraid of invisible powers; who let go things in hand
(present interests and pleasures) for a reversion and hope.

As if God's word were not sufficient security; as if we
may not as well rely upon things conspicuous to reason, as
those which are obvious to sense.

If Christianity be plainly false, they say well; but if it <sup>Αρεται.
2 Theff. iii.</sup>
be true, very absurdly; yea if probable, very imprudently; 2.
yea if possible, not wisely.

^c Psal. xii. 2. Jam. i. 8. iv. 8. 2 Chron. xii. 33. 1 Tim. iii. 8. Δ'γλωσ.
Psal. xxxviii. 37. Their heart was not whole with him. (O. Tr.) Deut. xviii.
13. Job i. 8. Psal. xlv. 18. cxix. 51. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 2. Job xxiii. 11.
Matt. vi. 24.. Luke xvi. 13. Δουλὸν κυρίου.

^f Rom. xvi. 19. Σοφὸς οἷς τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀπειροὺς δὲ οἷς τὸ κακόν.

SERM. LXVII. They charge conscientious men with timorousness, faintheartedness.

It is timorousness or blâmable fear to dread things without reason, things nowise formidable, which cannot hurt us; such a timorous man is he, that out of fear of men, (of displeasing them, of suffering by them, of their reproach,) &c. transgresseth his duty.

But to fear God is wisdom, soberness, duty, virtue; it is handsome and honourable, becoming our nature, our condition; the passion of fear was chiefly put in us for this purpose, as its best use.

Is it courage, and not rather madness to provoke, to resist, to challenge, to cope with the Almighty? is it courage to throw one's self down a precipice, to leap into the infernal lake? is it gallantry to dare transgress all reason and sobriety? is it brave to be wild and senseless, &c.?

It is true courage to resist and repel sin assaulting a man with whatever advantages; to dare to do well, although vain men deride, and spiteful men hate us for it.

It is a kind of martyrdom to be ill used by the world for adhering to his duty; and he hath a share in that, *Blessed are they, who suffer for righteousness.*

Matt. x. 39. In fine, it is a vain prudence to be thus politic with
 Ὁ ἰσχυρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπολλύει αὐτήν. God; whereby we shall lose the whole, or that part which is invaluable, out of presumption to save a small inconsiderable part.

Gal. v. 11. If this be prudence, *then*, as St. Paul saith, *is the offence of the cross ceased.*
 Matt. x. 38.
 xvi. 24.

Phil. iii. 8. Then our Lord prescribed a foolish condition.

Then were the Apostles very imprudent, who deserted all, and suffered so much for their conscience; being content to secure their spiritual interest, and to obtain the eternal rewards of piety; *choosing the better part, which could not be taken from them.*

Luke x. 42.
 Jam. iii. 13. What the true wisdom is in such cases St. James hath told us: *Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.*

S E R M O N L X V I I I .

OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

PSALM cxlv. 9.

The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.

THE goodness of God is a frequented theme ; to many SERM. perhaps it may seem vulgar and trite ; so that discourse LXVIII. thereon, like a story often told, may be nauseous to their ears : but in truth neither can we speak too much upon this most excellent subject, nor ought we ever to be weary in hearing about it ; for it is a sign that the palate of our mind is disordered, if we do not with delight and affection relish any mention of divine goodness. Yea, the observation of men's common practice would induce us to think, that either this point is not so well known, or but little believed, or at least not well considered and applied. For how could we be so void of love to God, of gratitude toward him, of faith and hope in him, were we thoroughly persuaded, did we seriously consider, that he is so exceedingly good toward us ? How can we be so insensible of the benefits we enjoy, so distrustful of finding succours and supplies in our need, so dissatisfied and discontented with what befalls us, if we conceive and weigh, that all things do proceed from, are guided and governed by immense goodness ? How also, if men have such an opinion of God impressed on their minds, comes it to pass, that they are so little careful to resemble and imitate him

SERM. LXVIII. in kindness, bounty, and mercy to one another? How is it, in fine, that the most powerful argument to all manner of good practice, and the mightiest aggravation of sin, if well known and pondered, hath so little force and efficacy upon us? From experience therefore this argument may seem scarce sufficiently inculcated. We may add, that discourse upon this attribute* (which above all other attributes doth render God peculiarly admirable and amiable) hath this special advantage beyond other discourses, that it doth, if our hearts conspire therewith, approach most nearly to the formal exercise of the most high and heavenly parts of devotion, praise and thanksgiving; that it more immediately conduces to the breeding, the nourishing, the augmenting in us the best and noblest of pious affections, love and reverence to God; trust and hope in him; willing resolutions to please and serve him; whence it is consequent, that we cannot too much employ our thoughts, our words, or our attention upon this point. Besides so much reason, we have also good example to countenance us in so doing: we have the precedent of the holy Psalmist resolving to make it his constant and continual employment: *I will sing, saith he, of the mercies of the Lord; with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.* And, *Every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name for ever and ever;* (that blessing and praising God, the context shews to have consisted especially in the declaration of God's great goodness :) and, *It is a good thing, saith he again, to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O thou most High: to shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night.* Such were his intentions, and such his judgment about this practice; and we find him in effect true and answerable to them; every song of his, every meditation, every exercise of devotion chiefly harping upon this string; and he earnestly wishes that others would consent and consort with him

Pf. lxxxix.

1.

Pfal. cxlv.

2.

Pfal. xcii.

1, 2.

* ——— Οὐδὲ, ὃ πολλοὶ ἔνουν, ἵφ' οἷς θαυμάζεται, ἔδιν ἔναι ὡς τὰ πάντα ἐργάτων διωκτῶν, Naz. Orat. 26.

therein; he earnestly exhorts and excites them thereto: *O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! Praise the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* That one example might sufficiently authorize this practice; but we have innumerable others, and those the highest that can be, to encourage and engage us thereto; even the whole choir of heaven, whose perpetual business and happy entertainment it is to contemplate with their minds, to celebrate with their voices, the immense goodness of God; *They have,* as Rev. iv. 8. it is in the Revelation, *no rest day or night, from performing this office.* Such is the subject of our discourse; the which our text most plainly and fully expresses; asserting not only the goodness of God, but the universal and boundless extent thereof; *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies (or his bowels of affection and pity) are over all his works.* And that God indeed is such, we shall first endeavour to declare, then shall briefly apply the consideration thereof to practice.

That God the Lord, and Maker of all things, is of himself, in regard to all his creatures, especially to us men, superlatively good, that is, disposed never without just or necessary cause to harm us, and inclinable to do us all possible and befitting good, the universal frame of nature and the constant course of Providence do afford us sufficient reason to conceive, and most frequent, most express testimonies of holy Scripture do more fully demonstrate. There is no argument from natural effects discernible by us, which proveth God's existence, (and innumerable such there are, every sort of things well studied may afford some,) the which doth not together persuade God to be very kind and benign; careful to impart to us all befitting good, suitable to our natural capacity and condition; and unwilling that any considerable harm, any extreme want or pain should befall us. (I interpose such limitations, for that an absolute, or universal and perpetual exemption from all kinds or all degrees of inconvenience, an accumulation of all sorts of appearing good upon us,

SERM.
LXVIII.
Psal. cvii.
8. cvi. 1.

SERM. LXVIII. doth not become or suit our natural state of being, or our rank in perfection among creatures ; neither, all things being duly stated and computed, will it turn to best account for us.) The best (no less convincing than obvious) arguments, asserting the existence of a Deity, are deduced from the manifold and manifest footsteps of admirable wisdom, skill, and design apparent in the general order, and in the particular frame of creatures ; the beautiful harmony of the whole, and the artificial contrivance of each part of the world ; the which it is hardly possible that any unprejudiced and undistempered mind should conceive to proceed from blind chance, or as blind necessity. But with this wisdom are always complicated no less evident marks of goodness. We cannot in all that vast bulk of the creation, and numberless variety of things, discover any piece of mere pomp, or dry curiosity ; every thing seems to have some beneficial tendency ; according to which it confers somewhat to the need, convenience, or comfort of those principal creatures, which are endued with sense and capacity to enjoy them. Most of them have a palpable relation to the benefit (to the subsistence or delight) of living creatures ; and especially in an ultimate relation to the benefit of man ; and the rest, although their immediate use be not to our dim sight so discernible, may therefore be reasonably presumed in their natural designation to regard the same end. Wherefore as upon consideration of that ample provision, which is made in nature for the necessary sustenance, defence, and relief, for the convenience, delight, and satisfaction of every creature, any man, who is not careless or stupid, may be induced to cry out with the Psalmist, *O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! in wisdom hast thou made them all : so may he with no less reason and ground after him pronounce and acknowledge ; The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord : The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy : Thy mercy is great unto the heavens : Thy mercy is great above the heavens.* It is indeed because divine goodness is freely diffusive and communicative of itself ; because essential love is active and fruitful in beneficence ; because

Psal. civ.
24.

Pf. xxxiii.
5. cxix. 64.
lviii. 10.
cvi. 4.
civ. 10, &c.
lxxv. 11.
ciii. 4.

highest excellency is void of all envy, selfishness, and tenacity, that the world was produced such as it was; those perfections being intrinsic to God's nature, disposed him to bestow so much of being, of beauty, of pleasure upon his creatures. *He openeth his hand, they are filled with good*: it is from God's open hand, his unconfined bounty and liberality, that all creatures do receive all that good which fills them, which satisfies their needs, and satiates their desires. Every pleasant object we view, every sweet and favourable morsel we taste, every fragrantcy we smell, every harmony we hear; the wholesome, the cheering, the useful, yea, the innocent and inoffensive qualities of every thing we do use and enjoy, are so many perspicuous arguments of divine goodness; we may not only by our reason collect it, but we even touch and feel it with all our senses.

The like conclusion may be inferred from the observation of divine Providence. Every signification, or experiment, whence we may reasonably infer that divine power and wisdom do concur in upholding, managing, and directing the general state of things, or the particular affairs of men, being well examined and weighed, would afford reason apt to persuade, that the Governor of the world is graciously affected toward his creatures and subjects. The general preservation of things in their natural constitution and order; the dispensing constant vicissitudes of season, so as may serve for the supply of our needs; the maintaining such a course of things in the world, that, notwithstanding the great irregularity of will, and violence of passion in so many persons; yet men do ordinarily shift so as to live tolerably upon earth in peace and safety, and enjoyment of competent accommodations for life; with the aids and consolations arising from mutual society; the supports, encouragements, and rewards of virtue many times in a strange manner administered; the restraints, disappointments, and seasonable chastisements of wickedness, especially when it grows exorbitant and outrageous, unexpectedly intervening, with the like passages of Providence, will, to him that shall regard the works of the Lord, and

SERM.
LXVIII.

Pf. civ. 28.

Pf. xxviii. 5.
Isa. v. 12.

SERM. *the operation of his hands*, sufficiently declare as the other
LXVIII. glorious attributes, (wisdom, power, and justice,) so especially the goodness of him, who presides over the world; assuring that he is a friend to the welfare, and dislikes the misery of mankind. He that shall well observe and consider how among so many fierce and hardhearted, so many crafty and spiteful, so many domineering and devouring spirits, the poor and weak, the simple and harmless sort of people do however subsist, and enjoy somewhat, cannot but suspect that an undiscernible hand, full of pity and bounty, doth often convey the necessary supports of life to them, doth often divert imminent mischiefs from them; cannot but acknowledge it credible, what the holy Scripture teacheth, that God is the friend, and patron, and protector of those needy and helpless people,

Psal. xiv. 6. *redeeming their soul from deceit and violence*, as the
tot. x. 14. Psalmist speaks; that he is, as the Prophet expresseth it,
lxxii. 12. *a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress,*
Isa. xxv. 4. *a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the*
blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. He that shall remark, how frequently, in an unaccountable way, succour and relief do spring up to just and innocent persons; so that in a whole age, as the Psalmist observed,

Psal. xxxvii. 25. such persons do not appear destitute or forsaken; how also iniquity is commonly stopped in its full career, and then easily receives a check, when its violence seemed uncontrollable; how likewise many times the world is rescued from confusions and distractions unextricable by any visible wit or force; with other like occurrences in human affairs; must admit it for a reasonable hypothesis (fit to render a cause of such appearances) that a transcendent goodness doth secretly interpose, furthering the production of such effects: he must upon such observation be ready to verify that of the Psalmist: *Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.* St. Paul instructs us, that in past times (that is, in all generations from the beginning of things) *God did attest himself* to be the Governor of the world: How? *ἀγαθοποιῶν*, by his beneficence; *giving to men showers from*

Psal. lviii. ult.

Acts xiv. 17.

heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness: competent evidences, it seems, these were of his providence, and withal (supposing that) certain demonstrations of his goodness: although some have abused this kind of testimony, or argumentation, so valid in itself, unto a contrary purpose; alleging, that if God ruled the world, so much wickedness and impiety would not be tolerated therein; that ingrateful and evil men could not so thrive and flourish; that more speedy and more severe vengeance would be executed; that benefits would not be scattered among the crowd of men, with so promiscuous and undistinguishing a freeness. But such discourses, upon a just and true account, do only infer the great patience and clemency, the unconfined mercy and bounty of our Lord; that he is in disposition very different from pettish and impatient man, who, should he have the reins put into his hands, and in his administration of things should be so often neglected, crossed, abused, would soon overturn all things; and, being himself discomposed with passion, would precipitate the world into confusion and ruin.

Things would not have subsisted hitherto, and continued in their orderly course, but by the moderation of an immense goodness; by that

—magni custos clementia mundi.

Claud.

It is by the Lord's mercies that we (we, the whole body of sinful men, so guilty of heinous provocations and rebellions against our Maker) are not consumed. And what again God in the Prophet speaks concerning Israel, he might have applied to the whole nation of men: *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? I will not execute the fierceness of my anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not man.* The reason (for I am God, and not man) is observable; implying (upon parity of reason in the cases, concerning that one nation, and concerning the body of men) that it is an indulgence and forbearance above, if not contrary to the temper of man, and even beyond hu-

SERM.
LXVIII.

Lam. iii.
32.

Hos. xi. 8.

SERM. man conceit, whereby the state of things here doth subsist,
 LXVIII. and is preserved from ruin.

Thus nature and thus Providence do bear witness concerning the disposition of God. As for Scripture, there is nothing either in way of positive assertion more frequently inculcated, or by more illustrious examples set forth, and made palpable, than this attribute of God. When God would impart a portraiture or description of himself to his dearest friend and favourite, Moses; the first and chief lineaments thereof are several sorts, or several instances of goodness; he expresses himself *Merciful and gracious*, אל long suffering, and abundant in goodness: (*Merciful: El rachum*) a God of pitying, or strong in pity; that is, most apt to commiserate and to succour those who are in need or distress. *Gracious*, that is, ready both freely to forgive wrongs, and to dispense favours. *Long suffering*, or longus irarum, that is, not soon moved, or apt easily to conceive displeasure; not hasty in execution of vengeance, or venting his anger in hurtful effects. *Abundant in goodness*, that is, not sparing as to quantity or quality, either in the multitude or magnitude of his favours, but in all respects exceedingly liberal; conferring willingly both very many and very great benefits. Such did God represent himself to Moses, when he desired a fuller knowledge and nearer acquaintance with him, than ordinary means afford. The same character in substance we have often repeated, and sometimes with advantage of emphatical expression, well deserving our observation and regard; as when the Prophet Joel saith, that God is *penitent*, or sorry, for evil inflicted; and Micah, that he *delighteth in mercy*; and when Nehemiah calleth him a *God of pardons*; and when Isaiah represents him as *waiting* (or seeking occasions) to be *gracious*: and all this in the Old Testament, where God seems to look upon man with a less serene and debonaire aspect. Indeed, as that dispensation (suitably to the nature and condition of things under it) doth set out God's mercy and goodness, with especial relation to this present world, or temporal estate; so the New one more abundantly displays his more excellent

Exod.
xxxiv. 6.

Psal.
lxxxvi. 5.
ciii. 8, &c.

Joel ii. 18.
Micah vii.
18.
Neh. ix. 17.
Isa. xxx.
18.

care and love of our souls; his great tenderness of our spiritual and eternal welfare. It is all of it in its nature and design but as it were one entire declaration of the *τὸ χρη-
στὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ*, (the beneficial disposition, the benignity, or bountifulness of God, as St. Paul telleth us;) it is a rare project of divine philanthropy; an illustrious affidavit of God's wonderful propensity to bless and save mankind; manifested by the highest expressions and instances of love and goodness that were possible. (For his not sparing his own Son, *the express image of his substance*, the dearest object of his infinite love, the partaker of his eternal nature and glory, but delivering him up a sacrifice for our offences; his most earnest wooing our baseness and unworthiness to reconciliation with him, and admission or acceptance of his favour; his tendering upon so fair and easy terms an endless life in perfect joy and bliss; his furnishing us with so plentiful means and powerful aids for attaining that happy state—how pregnant demonstrations are these, of unspeakable goodness toward us! whence) The ordinary titles in this dispensation attributed unto him, are, *the God of love and peace, of hope, of patience; of all grace, of all consolation; the father of pities, rich in mercy, full of bowels; love and goodness itself*. Thus doth the Scripture positively assert God's goodness; thus it directly represents and describes his gracious disposition toward us. And as for examples, (which must serve as to illustrate and explain, so also to verify and assure matters of this nature,) if we carefully attend to God's ordinary proceedings with men there recorded, we shall find this disposition very conspicuous in them. Who can recount the number, or set out the value of those instances wherein God's goodness is expressed toward such as loved him? of his admirable condescension in drawing them to him; of the affectionate tenderness, with which he constantly embraced them; of his merciful indulgence toward them, when provoked by their untowardly behaviour; of his kind acceptance, and munificent recompensing their endeavours to please him; of his deep compassionating their

SERM.
LXVIII.

Rom. ii. 4.

Rom. v. 21.

2 Cor. xiii.

11. i. 3.

1 Pet. v. 10.

Eph. ii. 4.

Jam. v. 11.

1 John iv.

8.

Luke vi.

35. For he

is kind unto

the un-

thankful,

and to the

evil.

SERM. sufferings; of his vigilant carefulness over them, and over
LXVIII. all their concerns? Methinks the highest expressions
 that language, assisted with all its helps of metaphor and
 resemblance, can afford, are very languid and faint in
 comparison of what they strain to represent, when the
 goodness of God toward them who love him comes to be
 expressed: *As the heaven is high above the earth, so great
 is his mercy toward them that fear him: Like as a father
 pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him:*
 so David strives to utter it, but with similitudes far short
 of the truth. If any will come near to reach it, it is that
 in Moses and Zechariah, when they are compared to *the
 apple of God's eye*, that is, to the most dear and tender
 part, as it were, about him.

Psal.
 xxxvi. 6.
 Psal. ciii.
 11, 13.

Deut.
 xxxiii. 10.
 Zech. ii. 8.

John xv.
 14.
 2 Chron.
 xx. 7.

Pf. xxxiv. 7.

We find them often styled, and ever treated, as friends
 and as children; and that in a sense transcending the vul-
 gar signification of those words; for, what friendship could
 endure, could pass over, could forget, could admit an en-
 tire reconciliation and reestablishment in affection after
 such heinous indignities, such infidelities, such undutiful-
 ness, as were those of Adam, of Noah, of David, of Peter?
 Who would have received into favour and familiarity a
 Manasses, a Magdalen, a Paul? Who would so far extend
 his regard upon the posterity (upon such a posterity, so
 untoward, so unworthy) of his friend, as God did upon
 that of Abraham, in respect unto him? What great
 prince would employ his principal courtiers to guard and
 serve a poor attendant, a mean subject of his? Yet, *The
 angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear
 him, and delivereth them*; and many instances we have of
 those glorious inhabitants of heaven by God's appointment
 stooping down to wait upon and to perform service to the
 sons of men. But upon examples of this nature, being
 numberless, and composing indeed the main body of the
 sacred history, (it being chiefly designed to represent
 them,) I shall not insist; I shall only observe, for prevent-
 ing or satisfying objections, (yea, indeed, for turning them
 to the advantage and confirmation of that which we

affert,) that even in those cases, wherein God's highest severity hath been exercised, when God hath purposed to exhibit most dreadful instances of his justice upon the most provocative occasions; we may discern his goodness eminently shewing itself^b: that even in the greatest extremity of his displeasure, in his acts of highest vengeance, *mercy* Jam. ii. 13. doth κατακαυχᾶσθαι τῆς κρίσεως, (as St. James speaketh,) *boast itself, and triumph over justice*: that God, as the sun, (to use Tertullian's similitude,) when he seems most to infect and scorch us, doth even then dispense useful and healthful influences upon us^c. Even, I say, in the most terrible and amazing examples of divine justice (such as were the ejecting and excluding mankind from Paradise; the general destruction in the deluge; the excising and extirpation of the Amorites, together with other inhabitants of Canaan; the delivering Israel and Judah into the Assyrian thralldom, the final destruction of Jerusalem, together with the dispersion of the Jewish nation over the world, and its sad consequences) we may (not hardly) observe particulars, more than favouring of great mercy and goodness.

Vide Chryf. Tom. vi. Or. 8. p. 63. optime.

I. That (in most of these cases, in all according to some account) God was not moved to the displeasure productive of those effects but upon very great considerations. That he did not seek advantages, nor embrace all occasions; but was incensed by superlative degrees of iniquity and impurity, (such in their own nature, and much aggravated by their circumstances,) such as rendered common life inconvenient and insupportable to men; made the earth to stink with their filth and corruption; to groan under the burden and weight of them; to pant and labour for a riddance from them.

^b Τίνας φιλονεικία ἡ τιμωρία· ὅταν γὰρ ἰγὼ ποίδομαι καλᾷζω τὸν Θεόν. *Naz. Orat. 38.*

^c Ἐγὼ τσαύτην περίσσειαν ὥσπερ φημι τοῦ Θεοῦ κατεργασίας, ὡς μὴ μόνον ἀφ' οὗ βέλτερον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀφ' οὗ ὡς ἐκάλειον ἡμεῖς δύνανται τὴν ἀγαθότητα αὐτοῦ διανοῦναι, καὶ τὴν φιλονεικίαν. *Chryf. Ἀνθ. ζ.*

^c Οὗτοίς ἀπαθὴς ὢν, καὶ ἐνεργετῇ, καὶ καλᾷζω, ἰστέον ἀγαθός. *Ibid.*

^c Tunc maxime est optimus, cum tibi non bonus; sicut fol tibi etiam quando non putas optimus et utilis, &c. *Tertull. in Marc. ii. 2.*

SERM. LXVIII. 2. That God did not upon the first glimpses of provocation proceed to the execution and discharge of his wrath, but did with wonderful patience expect a change in the offenders, *waiting to be gracious*, as the Prophet speaketh; affording more than competent time, and means more than sufficient of appeasing him by repentance; vouchsafing frequent admonitions, solicitations, threatenings, moderate corrections, and other such proper methods conducing to their amendment and to their preservation.

Iſa. xxx.
18.

3. That the inflictions themselves, how grievous soever in appearance, were not really extreme in measure; not accompanied with so acute torments, nor with so lingering pains, nor with so utter a ruin, as might have been inflicted; but that (as Ezra, in respect to one of those cases, confesseth) they *were less than their iniquities deserved*. That, as it is in the Psalm, *He did not stir up all his wrath*; which would have immediately consumed them, or infinitely tormented them.

Ez. ix. 13.
Pf. lxxviii.
38.

4. That (consequently upon some of those premises) the afflictions brought upon them were in a sort rather necessary than voluntary in respect of him; rather a natural fruit of their dispositions and dealings, than a free result of his will; however contrary to his primary intentions and desires. Whence he no less truly than earnestly disclaims having any pleasure in their death, that he *afflicted willingly, or grieved the children of men*; and charges their disasters upon themselves, as the sole causes of them.

Ezek. xviii.
23, 29.
xxxiii. 11.
Lam. iii.
33.
Hof. xiii. 9.

5. That farther, the chastisements inflicted were wholesome and profitable, both in their own nature, and according to his design^d; both in respect to the generality of men, (who by them were warned, and by such examples deterred from incurring the like mischiefs; were kept from the inconveniences, secured from the temptations, the violences, the allurements, the contagions of the pre-

^d Chryſ. 'Ανθ. ζ'.

'Ομοῦ καὶ διαπαιθεῖς καὶ ἱκανοὶ καὶ διδασκαλὸς ἔστω ὁ Θεός. *Ibid.*

sent evil state; according to that reason alleged for punishment of this kind: *All the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously,* ^{SERM. LXVIII.} and in regard to the sufferers themselves, who thereby were prevented from proceeding farther in their wicked courses; accumulating (or *treasuring up*, as the Apostle speaketh) farther degrees of wrath, as obdurate and incorrigible people will surely do: (*Why, saith the Prophet, should ye be stricken any more?* (to what purpose is moderate correction?) *Ye will revolt more and more.*) That he did with a kind of violence to his own inclinations, and reluctancy, inflict punishments on them. *O Ephraim, how shall I give thee up, O Ephraim?* Yea farther: ^{Deut. xvii. 13.}

6. That, during their sufferance, God did bear compassion toward them who underwent it. *His bowels, as we are told, founded and were troubled; his heart was turned within him; his repentings were kindled together; in all their afflictions himself was afflicted; he remembered, and considered they were but dust; that they were but flesh,* (that they were but of a weak and frail temper; that they were naturally prone to corruption and evil,) and did therefore pity their infirmity and their misery. ^{Isa. lxiii. 9, 15. Hof. xi. 8. Jer. xxxi. 20. Gen. vi. 3. viii. 21. Psal. ciii. 14. lxxviii. 39.}

7. That God in his wrath remembered mercy, (as the prophet Habakkuk speaks,) mixing gracious intentions of future refreshment and reparation with the present executions of justice. *I know, saith he in the prophet Jeremiah, the thoughts that I think toward you; thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Behold, I will bring health and cure, I will cure them, and will reveal unto them abundance of peace and truth.* And, *For a small moment,* saith he again in Isaiah, *have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.* And, *Ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem—* and, *ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it,* saith the Lord; (he saith so in Ezekiel;) ^{Gen. vi. 3. viii. 21. Jer. xxix. 11. xxxiii. 6. Isa. liv. 7. Ezek. xiv. 2, 23.}

^c Ἐπιτίθει σιμορίαν, οὐ τῶν ἀπειλούντων ἀπαντῶν δίχην, ἀλλὰ τὰ μίλλωντα διασώζωντες. *Chrys.* tom. viii. p. 99.

SERM. *without cause*, that is, without a beneficial design toward
 LXVIII. them.

8. Lastly, That he always signified a readiness to turn
 from his anger, and to forgive them; and upon very equal
 and easy terms to be fully reconciled to them; according
 Pf. ciii. 9. to that in the Psalm, *He doth not always chide, neither
 will he keep his anger for ever*; but upon any reasonable
 overtures of humiliation, confession, and conversion to
 him, was ready to abate, yea, to remove the effects of his
 displeasure: *Thou wast a God that forgavest them, though
 thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.*
 Psal. xcix.
 8.

These particulars, if we attentively survey those dread-
 ful examples of divine severity forementioned, (the great-
 est which history acquaints us with, or which have been
 shewed on this theatre of human affairs,) we may observe
 most of them in all, all of them in some, either plainly
 expressed, or sufficiently insinuated by the circumstances
 observable in the historical narrations concerning them;
 so that even the harshest instances of God's wrathful deal-
 ing with some men, may well serve to the illustration of
 his mercy and goodness toward all men; may evince it
 true, what our Lord affirms, that God is *χρηδς ἐν ἀχα-*
 Luke vi. 85. *ρίστοις καὶ πονηροῖς*, *kind and beneficent even to the most in-*
grateful and unworthy persons. To make which obser-
 vation good, and consequently to assert the verity of our
 text (that *God is good unto all, and merciful over all his*
works) against the most plausible exceptions, I shall exa-
 mine the particulars in the following discourse.

SERMON LXIX.

OF THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

PSALM cxlv. 9.

*The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all
his works.*

I SHALL now more particularly consider the several in-
stances before mentioned. SERM.
LXIX.

I. The punishment inflicted on mankind for the first transgression containeth in it much of depth and mystery, surpassing perhaps all capacity of man to reach; its full comprehension being by divine wisdom, I conceive, purposely concealed from us; so that I cannot pretend thoroughly to explain it; and shall not therefore speak much about it.

This indeed is clear, that God did in his proceedings, occasioned thereby, intend remarkably to evidence his grievous resentment and indignation against wilful disobedience; yet in the management thereof we may observe, that,

1. After that provocation (in itself so high, and liable to so great aggravations) * God did express his resentment in so calm and gentle a manner, that Adam, though abashed upon the conscience of his fault, was not yet by the vehemency of the reproof utterly dismayed or dejected.

* Vid. Chryf. 'Ανθ. ζ. Οὐ γὰρ ὕπερ, καὶ δάσκαρος ἐκείνῃ ἢ ὑπεριστάτης ἐπειρῶν, ἢ μακρῶς, καὶ παμπληγῶς, &c. Ibid.

SERM. 2. God used great moderation in the infliction of this
LXIX. punishment; mitigating the extremity of the sentence
 Gen. ii. 17. justly decreed and plainly declared to Adam, (that, in
 case of his offending against the law prescribed him, he
 should immediately die,) for notwithstanding his forfeiture
 that very day of life, God reprieved him, and allowed
 him a long life, almost of a thousand years, after.

3. God did not quite reject man thereupon, nor did
 withdraw his fatherly care and providence from him, but
 openly continued them; inasmuch that immediately after
 the curse pronounced upon our first parents, the next pas-
 sage we meet with is, that unto Adam and his wife did
 Gen. iii. 21. the Lord God make coats, and clothed them.

4. Although indeed man was by his fault a great loser,
 and became deprived of high advantages; yet the mercy
 of God did leave him in no very deplorable estate, simply
 considered, as to his life here; the relics of his first estate,
 and the benefits continued to him, being very considerable;
 so that we the inheritors of that great disaster do com-
 monly find the enjoyment of life, with the conveniences
 attending it, to be sweet and desirable.

5. The event manifests, that while God in appearance
 so severely punished mankind, he did in his mind reserve
 thoughts of highest kindness toward us; even then de-
 signing not only to restore us to our former degree, but
 to raise us to a capacity of obtaining a far more high
 pitch of happiness. While he excluded us from a ter-
 restrial paradise here, he provided a far better celestial one,
 into which, if we please, by obedience to his holy laws,
 we may certainly enter. So that in this of all most
 heavy instance of vengeance, God's exceeding goodness
 and clemency do upon several considerations most clearly
 shine.

II. The calamity, which by the general deluge did
 overflow the world, was not (we may consider) brought
 upon men but in regard to the most enormous offences
 long continued in, and after amendment was become de-
 perate: not till after much forbearance, and till men were
 grown to a superlative pitch of wickedness, by no fit means

(by no friendly warning, no sharp reprehension, no moderate chastisement) corrigible; not until the earth was become (especially for persons of any innocence or integrity) no tolerable habitation, but a theatre of lamentable tragedies, a seat of horrid iniquity, a sink of loathsome impurity. So that in reason it was to be esteemed rather a favour to mankind, to rescue it from so unhappy a state, than to suffer it to persist therein. To snatch men away out of so uncomfortable a place, from so wretched a condition, was a mercy; it had been a judgment to have left them annoying, rising, and harassing; biting, tearing, and devouring; yea, defiling and debauching each other; and so heaping upon themselves loads of guilt, and deeper obligations to vengeance. *The earth, saith the text, was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth; which universal and extreme corruption had not in probability sprung up in a small time; for,*

SERM.
LXIX.

Gen. vi.
11, 12.

Nemo repente fuit turpissimus,——

is true not only of single men, but of communities; no people, no age doth suddenly degenerate into extreme degrees of wickedness; so that the divine patience had long endured and attended upon men, before the resolution of thus punishing them was taken up; the which also was not at first peremptory and irreversible, but in God's design and desire it was revocable; for the world had a long reprieve after the sentence passed; execution was deferred till Noah's long preaching of righteousness, and denouncing of judgment in a manner so notorious and signal, (not by verbal declarations only, but by the visible structure of the ark,) could prevail nothing toward their amendment, but was either distrusted or disregarded, and perhaps derided by them. For, as St. Peter tells us, *they were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing; that is, (as is collected by several interpreters from the text of the story,) during no less than one hundred and twenty years; a competent time for their recollecting*

¹ Pet. iii.

^{20.}
² Pet. ii. 5.

Gen. vi. 3.

SERM. themselves, and endeavouring by amendment of life to
 LXIX. prevent the ruin threatened to come upon them. Yet

Gen. vi. 6. notwithstanding that, this obstinate and incorrigible disobedience did so much displease God, as that in consideration thereof God is said to have *repented that he made man on the earth*, and to have been thereby grieved at the heart: yet did he so temper his anger as not utterly to destroy mankind, but provided against its total ruin, by preserving one family as a seminary thereof; preserving the father thereof (questionless by a special grace) from the spreading contagion, inspiring him with faith, and qualifying him for the favour, which by him he designed to communicate unto the world; the reparation thereof, and restoring the generations of men. So that also through this passage of providence, how dismal and dreadful soever at first sight, much goodness will be transparent to him that looks upon it attentively.

III. In the next place, as to that extermination and excision of the Canaanites, which carries so horrible an appearance of severity, we may find it qualifiable, if we consider, that for the nature of the trespasses, which procured it, they were insufferably heinous and abominable: most sottish, barbarous, and base superstitions, (cruelty and impurity being essential ingredients into their performances of religion, and it being piety with them to be exceedingly wicked,) and in their other practice most beastly lasciviousnesses, most bloody violences, oppressions, and rapines generally abounding. So that for those men themselves, who were by turns, as it happened, the authors and the objects of these dealings, it could not be desirable to continue in a state of living so wretched and uncomfortable. Impunity had been no mercy to such people, but rather a cruelty; cutting them off must needs be the greatest favour they were capable of, it being only removing them from a hell here, and preventing their deserving many worse hells hereafter. Even to themselves it was a favour, and a greater one to their posterity, whom they might have brought forth to succeed into their courses, and to the consequences of them; whom they

would have engaged into their wicked customs, and their woful mischiefs. They were not so destroyed from the land, until it grew uninhabitable in any tolerable manner, and itself could not, as it were, endure them any longer, but (as the text doth most significantly expresse it) *did spue them out*; being like a stomach furcharged with foul or poisonous matter, which it loathes, and is pained with, and therefore naturally labours to expel. Neither was this sad doom executed upon them till after four hundred years of forbearance; for even in Abraham's time God took notice of their iniquity, then born and growing; and gave account of his suspending their punishment; *because, said he, the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full*, (that is, was not yet arrived to a pitch of desperate obstinacy and incorrigibility :) while there was the least glimpse of hope, the least relics of any reason, any regret, any shame in them, the least possibility of recovery, God stopped his avenging hand: but when all ground of hope was removed, the whole stock of natural light and strength was embezzled, all fear, all remorse, all modesty were quite banished away, all means of cure had proved ineffectual, the gangrene of vice had seized on every part, iniquity was grown mature and mellow; then was the stroke of justice indeed not more seasonable than necessary; then was the fatal sword the only proper remedy; then so with one stroke to cut off them, and their sins, and their mischiefs, and their miseries together, was an argument no less strong and clear of God's merciful goodness, than of his just anger toward them.

IV. The like account we may render of God's judgments upon the people of Israel. If we consult the Prophets, who declare the state of things, the facts, the dispositions, the guilts, that brought them down from heaven, we shall see, that they came upon account of an universal apostasy from both the faith and practice of true religion; *a deep corruption (like that in the days of Gibeah, as the prophet Hosea speaketh) in mind and manners; an utter perverting of all truth and right; an obstinate compliance with, or emulation of, the most abominable practices*

SERM.
LXIX.

Levit. xviii.

Gen. xv.

16.

SERM. of the heathen nations about them; an universal apostasy,
LXIX. I say, from God and all goodness; a thorough prevalence

of all iniquity. Hear the Prophets expressing it, and describing them. Jeremiah; *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem; see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will*

pardon it. Isaiah; *The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, broken the everlasting covenant: Ah sinful nation! a people laden with iniquities, a seed of evil doers; children that are corrupters! They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger; they are gone away backward, &c.* Thus do these and other Prophets in a like strain describe in the gross the state of things preceding those judgments. And

Ezek. xxii. in Ezekiel (in divers places, particularly in the 8th, but especially in the 22d chapter) we have their offences in detail, and by parts (their gross impieties, their grievous cruelties, extortions, and oppressions) set out copiously, and in most lively colours. And as the quality of their provocations was so bad, and the extension of them so large, so was their condition desperate; there were no means of remedy left, no hopes of amendment; so was their forehead covered with impudence, their heart hardened with obstinacy, their minds deeply tinctured with habitual pravity and perverseness: *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil,* saith Jeremiah concerning them. All methods of reclaiming them had proved fruitless; no favourable dealings, no gentle admonition or kind instruction would avail any thing; for

Jer. xliii.
28.

Isa. xxvi.
10.

it is of them the prophet Isaiah saith, *Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness.* No advices, no reproofs (how frequent, how vehement, how urgent soever) had any effect upon them. Almighty God declares often, that he had spoken unto them rising

Jer. xxv. 4. up early, but they would not hear nor regard his speech;
xxxii. 33. did not only neglect, and refuse, but *despise, loathe, mock,*
vi. 10.

and reproach it, (turning their back upon him, pulling away their shoulder, stiffening their neck, and stopping their ears, that they should not hear;) that he had spread out his hands all the day long to a rebellious and gainsaying people; to a people that (with extreme insolence and immodesty) provoked him to anger continually to his face. Nor could any tenders of mercy allure or move them: I said (God said it in Jeremiah) after all these things, Turn unto me; but she returned not. Amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin; and innumerable the like overtures we have of grace and mercy to them; all which they proudly and perversely rejected, persisting in their wicked courses: they even repelled and silenced, they rudely treated and persecuted the prophets sent unto them with messages of kind warning and overtures of grace; so obstructing all access of mercy to themselves: They say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things: so Isaiah reports their proceeding. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? so St. Stephen expostulates with them. Neither were gentler chastisements designed for their correction and cure anywise available; they made no impression on them, they produced no change in them: In vain, saith God, I have smitten your children, they have received no correction. And, Thou hast smitten them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction; they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return. And, The people turneth not to him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts. Unto this *καταρτισμός* *εἰς ἀνώλητον*, this perfect fitness, (as St. Paul speaketh,) this maturity of desperate and irrecoverable impiety, had that people grown, not at once, and on a sudden, but by continual steps of provocation, through a long course of time, during that divine patience sparing them, and by various expedients striving to recover them. This consideration

SERM.
LXIX.

Zech. vii.

11.

Neh. ix.

29, 30.

Isa. lxxv. 2.

2 Chron.

xxxvi. 16.

Jer. iii. 7.

vii. 3. iv. 1.

14. xviii.

11. xxvi.

12.

Jer. xi. 21.

xxxii. 30.

Matt. xxiii.

87.

Ezek. xviii.

Isa. xxx.

10.

Acta vii. 52.

Isa. i. 16,

17, &c.

(Neh. ix.

29.)

Jer. ii. 30.

Jer. v. 3.

Isa. ix. 13.

Rom. ix.

22.

SERM. LXIX. is frequently insisted upon, especially in the prophet Jeremiah: *The children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth: Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early, and sending them; yet they hearkened not unto me, &c.* Well then, after so many hundred years of abused patience, and unsuccessful labour to reclaim them, it was needful that justice should have her course upon them: yet how then did God inflict it, with what mildness and moderation, with what pity and relenting? *Nevertheless, say they in Nehemiah, for thy great mercies sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.*

Ezr. ix. 13. And, *Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve,* doth Ezra confess. *I will not execute the fierceness of my anger,* doth God himself resolve and declare in Hosea. So mild he was as to the measure of his punishing; and what compassion accompanied it, those pathetic expressions declare: *My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him. In all their afflictions he was afflicted, &c.*

We may add, that notwithstanding all these provocations of his wrath, and abusings of his patience, which thus necessitated God to execute his vengeance; yet even during the execution thereof, and while his hand was so stretched forth against them, he did retain thoughts of favour and intentions of doing good, even toward this so ingrateful, so insensible, so incorrigible a people: *For a small moment, saith God, have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee: I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.* Now these things being seriously laid together, have we not occasion and ground sufficient even in this instance, no less to admire and adore the wonderful benignity, mercy, and patience of God, than to dread and tremble at his justice?

V. As for the last so calamitous and piteous destruction of Jerusalem, with the grievous consequences thereof, SERM. LXIX. as we might apply thereto the former considerations, so we shall only observe what was peculiar in that case; that God dispensed such means to prevent it, (to remove the meritorious causes thereof, obstinate impenitency and incredulity; resisting the truth by him sent from heaven with so clear a revelation and powerful confirmation; despising the Spirit of God, and the dictates of their own conscience; basely misusing divers ways, and at last cruelly murdering the Son of God;) such means, I say, God did employ for the removing those provocatives of vengeance, which, as our Lord himself saith, were sufficient to have converted Tyre and Sidon; yea, to have preserved Sodom itself; so that our Saviour could with a compassionate grief deplore the unsuccessfulness of his tender affection, and solicitous care for their welfare, in these passionate terms: *How often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathers her chickens under her wing, but ye would not!* That St. John the Baptist's sharp reproofs, his powerful exhortations, his downright and clear forewarnings of what would follow, (*Even now, said he, the axe is laid to the root of the tree,*) attended with so remarkable circumstances of his person and his carriage, (which induced all the world about him to regard him as no ordinary man, but a special instrument of God and messenger from heaven,) did yet find no effect considerable: the Pharisees and Lawyers, those corrupt guides, whose authority managed the blind multitude, *defeating the counsel of God toward themselves,* as St. Luke speaketh, (that is, defeating his gracious purpose of reclaiming them from disobedience, and consequently of withholding the judgments imminent,) they reviled the person of that venerable Prophet; *He hath a devil,* said they: they slighted his premonitions, and rejected his advices, by observing which, those dreadful mischiefs, which fell upon their rebellious heads, might have been averted. We may add, that even those fearful judgments were tempered with mixtures of favourable design, not only to the community

SERM. of mankind, (which, by so remarkable a vengeance upon
LXIX. the persecutors of our Lord and the scorers of his doctrine, was converted unto, or confirmed in, the Christian faith,) but even toward that people whom it served to convince of their errors and crimes; to induce them to repentance, to provoke them unto the acknowledgment and embracing of God's truth, so palpably vindicated by him. So that I might here apply that passage of St. Paul, (if not directly and adequately according to his sense, yet with no incongruous allusion at least,) *Have they stumbled, that they should fall?* (or, was there no other design of God's judgments upon them, but their utter ruin?) *μη γένοιτο* No such matter; but through their fall salvation came to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy (or emulation.) And, in effect, as our Lord in the midst of his sufferings did affectionately pray for God's mercy upon them, as the Apostles did offer reconciliation unto them all indifferently, who would repent, and were willing to embrace it; so were such of them as were disposed to comply with those invitations, received to grace, how deeply soever involved in the continued guilt of those enormous persecutions, injuries, and blasphemies; as particularly St. Paul, that illustrious example of God's patience and mercy in this case. So that neither by this instance is any attribute of God more signified, than his transcendent goodness, in like manner as by the former instances, and in analogy to them by all others, that may be assigned. By all of them it will appear that God is primarily and of himself disposed to do all fitting and possible good to men, not to inflict evil more than is fit and necessary; that God is indeed *optimus ex naturæ proprietate*, (most good according to property of nature,) although *justus ex causæ necessitate*, (severe from the necessity of the case,) as Tertullian speaketh. To afflict men (either some men singly, or whole societies of men) may be sometimes expedient upon several accounts; for vindicating the esteem, and supporting the interest of goodness, which may by impunity be disgraced, endamaged, endangered; for the discrimination of good and evil men, in an observable

Rom. xi.
11.

1 Tim. i.
16.

De Refurr.
Carnis, c.
14.

manner; for the encouragement and comfort of the good, **SERM.**
 the reduction and amendment of the bad; for preventing **LXIX,**
 the contagion, and stopping the progress of iniquity,
 whereupon greater guilts and worse mischiefs would
 ensue: it may be as necessary as sharp physic to cure
 public or private distempers; as an instrument of rous-
 ing us out of our sinful lethargies; as that which may
 cause us better to understand ourselves, and more to re-
 member God; as a ground of fearing God, and an in-
 ducement to believe his providence. For those and many
 such purposes, to bring upon men things distasteful to
 sense may be very requisite; nor doth the doing it anywise
 prejudice the truth of divine goodness, but rather con-
 firms it, commends it, and advances its just esteem.
 It would be a fond indulgence, not a wise kindness; a
 cruel, rather than a loving pity, to deal otherwise. In
 fine, we are to consider, that all the mischiefs we undergo,
 God doth not so much bring them on us, as we do pull
 them on ourselves^h. They are αὐθαίρετα πύματα, *affected,*
 or *self-chosen mischiefs*; they are κακὰ βλαστήματα προαιρέσε-
 ως, *bad sprouts of our free choice*, as a Father calls them;
 they are, as another Father saith, ἐκυσίων κακῶν ἀκούσια
 ἐκγονα, *the unwilling offsprings of wilful evils*; they are
 the certain results of our own will, or the natural fruits of
 our actions; actions, which (however God desire, advise,
 command, persuade, entreat, excite) we do will, we are
 resolved to perform. *We in a manner, as Salvian saithⁱ,
 do force God to do whatever he doeth in this kind; violently
 plucking down vengeance on our own heads; compelling
 the kind and merciful Lord, against his nature and will, to
 afflict us; not so much as giving him leave to spare us.*
 God vehemently disclaims himself to be the original

Wisd. i. 12.
 Carm. Py-
 thag. Cynil.
 Hier. Da-
 masc.

Miseros nos
 si nec juran-
 ti Deo cre-
 dimus.
 Hier.

^h Basil. Orat. Quod Deus non est causa mali, eleganter et pulchre de hac re.

ⁱ Πάντα κατὰ καὶ πραγματοποιῶνται ὁ Θεός, ὅτι ἡμᾶς ἀπαλλάξει καλῶς, καὶ σπουδαίως. Chrys. tom. viii. p. 100.

ⁱ Nos vim Deo facimus iniquitatibus nostris; nos nolentem ulcisci cogimus. Deus enim pius et misericors est, et qui neminem velit perire, vel lacerare, &c. Salv. lib. 5. et 8.

SERM. cause; to design, (according to absolute or primary intention,) to desire, to delight in our grief, or our ruin. *As*

Ezek. xviii. 11. I live, saith the Lord, (and surely when God swears, we may believe that he is very serious,) I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his

Deut. xxx. 19. way, and live. I call heaven to record this day against you, that I have set life and death before you: therefore choose

Lam. iii. 33. life. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. He would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. He would not have any

Wisd. i. 13. perish, but that all should come to repentance. He made not death, nor hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living. God then, if we may believe him, is not the first author of our calamities. Who then? He tells us him-

Hos. xiii. 9. self: O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself: thou hast fallen

Jér. v. 25. by thine own iniquity. Your sins have withholden good

Isa. lxiv. 6. things from you. Our iniquities, like the wind, have taken

Matt. xxiii. 37. us away: How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not! The designs and the endeavours of God do tend to our welfare and salvation; it is our will and our actions which only procure our ruin: It is we, that, as

Wisd. i. 12. the Wise Man saith, seek death in the error of our life, and pull upon our own selves destruction. So that, to conclude this part of our discourse, even those passages of providence, which at first glimpse appear most opposite or disadvantageous to the goodness of God^k, (or to our opinion and belief concerning it,) do, being well sifted, notwile prejudice it, but rather serve to corroborate and magnify it.

I shall only farther briefly touch (or rather but mention) the uses and effects, to the producing which, the consideration of God's goodness, in so manifold ways declared, should be applied.

1. It should beget in us hearty love and reverence toward God, in regard to this attribute so excellent and

^k St. Chrysostom in divers places doth insist upon the goodness of God in making and threatening hell itself.

Τῆς βασιλείας οὐκ ἔλαττον, ἢ τῆς γένεως ἀπὸ τῆς δίκης αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν, &c. 'Αδφ. ζ.

amiable in itself, so beneficial and advantageous to us. **SERM. LXIX.**
 What can we esteem, what can we love, if so admirable goodness doth not affect us? How prodigiously cold and hard is that heart, which cannot be warmed and softened into affection by so melting a consideration!

2. It should produce, as grateful sense in our hearts, so real endeavours of thankful obedience in our lives. It should make us *walk worthy of God, to all well-pleasing*, Col. i. 10. *bringing forth fruit in every good work; taking heed of doing as did Hezekiah, of whom it is said, that he rendered not according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up; therefore was wrath upon him; that we may not have that exhortation justly applied unto us, Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?* ^{2 Chron. xxxii. 25.} ^{Deut. xxxii. 6.}

3. It should engage us the more to fear God; complying with the Prophet's admonition, *Fear the Lord and his goodness*; considering that intimation of the Psalmist, *There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared*; ^{Psal. cxxx.} observing that advice of Samuel, *Only fear the Lord, and serve him; for consider what great things he hath done for you.* ^{1 Sam. xii. 24.} For that indeed nothing is more terrible than goodness slighted, and patience abused.

4. It should humble, ashamed, and grieve us, for having crossed and offended such exceeding goodness and mercy. It should cause us greatly to detest our sins, which lie under so heinous an aggravation; to be deeply displeased with ourselves, who have so unworthily committed them.

5. It should therefore render us wary and vigilant against the commission of any sin; that is, of incurring the guilt of so enormous ingratitude and baseness; making us cautious of doing like those, of whom it is confessed in Nehemiah; *They did eat, and were filled, and delighted themselves in thy great goodness: nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy laws behind their back.* ^{Neh. ix. 25, 26.}

6. It should also breed and nourish in us faith and hope in God. For what reason can we have to distrust of so great goodness; that he will refuse to help us in our

SERM. need; that he will fail in accomplishment of his promises;
LXIX. that he will withhold what is convenient for us? It should

Vid. Chryf.
 ad Theod.
 ii. tom. 6.
 p. 63. opti-
 me et fufe.
 Matt. vii.
 11.

preserve us from despair. What temptation can we have to despair of mercy, if we heartily repent of our misdoings, and sincerely endeavour to please him?

7. It should upon the same account excite us to a free and constant exercise of all devotions. For why should we be shy or fearful of entering into so friendly and favourable a presence? why should we be backward from having (upon any occasion or need) a recourse to him, who is so willing, so desirous, so ready to do us good? what should hinder us from delighting in oblations of blessing and praise unto him?

Lam. iii.
 39.
 Jer. v. 25.

8. It ought to render us submissive, patient, and contented under God's hand, of correction, or trial, as knowing that it cannot be without very just cause, that such goodness seemeth displeased with us; that we are the chief causes of our suffering, or our want; so that we can have no good cause to repine, or complain: for, *Wherefore doth the living man complain? since a man (suffers) for the punishment of his sins; since it is our sins that withhold good things from us; since also we considering this attribute may be assured, that all God's dispensations do aim and tend to our good.*

Luke vi.
 35, 36.
 1 John iii.
 16.
 Coloss. iii.
 13.
 Eph. iv. 32.

9. It should also, in gratitude toward God, and imitation of him, engage us to be good, kind, and bountiful, placable, and apt to forgive; meek and gentle, pitiful, and affectionate toward our brethren; *to be good and merciful, as our heavenly Father is merciful and benign even toward the wicked and ungrateful; to be kind unto one another, full of bowels, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.*

Jude 4.

10. Lastly, we ought to have an especial care of perverting this excellent truth by mistakes and vain presumptions; that we do not turn the grace of God into wantonness, or occasion of licentious practice. Because God is very good and merciful, we must not conceive him to be fond, or slack, or careless; that he is apt to indulge us in sin, or to connive at our presumptuous transgression.

of his laws. No ; *ἔκστας τῷ ἀγαθῷ, ἢ ἀγαθῷ, ἢ μισοπονῆλα*, SERM. LXIX.
(the hatred of wickedness is consequent upon goodness even as such, as Clemens Alexandrinus saith,) God, even as he is good, cannot but detest that which is opposite and prejudicial to goodness ; he cannot but maintain the honour and interest thereof ; he cannot, he will not endure us to dishonour him, to wrong our neighbour, to spoil ourselves. As he is a sure friend to us as his creatures, so he is an implacable enemy to us as impenitent rebels and apostates from our duty. *The wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth.* As he is infinitely benign, so he is also perfectly holy, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. *He is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him. The foolish shall not stand in his sight ; he hateth all workers of iniquity. His face is against them that do evil.* Finally, as God is gracious to all such as are capable of his love, and qualified for his mercy ; so he is an impartial and upright Judge, who will deal with men according to their deserts, according to the tenor of his laws and ordinances ; according to his immutable decree and word : so that as we have great reason to trust and hope in him, so we have no true ground to presume upon him, vainly to trifle, or insolently to dally with him.

But I leave this point to be farther improved by your meditations.

Grant we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SERMON LXX.

NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD.

ROM. ii. 11.

For there is no respect of persons with God.

**SERM.
LXX.**

IT is an ordinary conceit, grounded on a superficial view of things, that Almighty God dispenseth his gifts with great inequality, and dealeth very partially with men; being lavish in his bounty to some, but sparing therein to others; slack and indulgent in calling some to account, but rigorous and severe in judgment toward others.

Which imagination often hath influence upon the affections and the actions of men; so that hence some men do Pt. lxxiii. 6. highly presume, others are much discouraged: some are apt to boast themselves special darlings and favourites of Heaven; others are tempted to complain of their being quite deserted, or neglected thereby.

But whoever more carefully will observe things, and weigh them with good consideration, shall find this to be a great mistake; and that in truth God distributeth his favours with very equal measures: he poiseeth the scales of justice with a most even hand; so that reasonably no man Job xxxi. 6. should be exalted, no man should be dejected in mind, upon account of any considerable difference in God's regard towards him, and other persons; the which is clearly discovered by God, or merely dependeth on his will and providence.

The advantages, which one man hath above another, being estimated morally, in reference to solid felicity and content, are indeed none; or are not absolutely made by God, but framed by men unto themselves. For,

God is indifferently affected toward persons as such, nakedly and privately considered; or as divested of moral conditions, qualifications, and actions: he in his dealing, whether as benefactor or judge, purely considereth the reason and exigency of things, the intrinsic worth of persons, the real merits of each cause; he maketh no arbitrary or groundless discriminations; he neither loveth and favoureth, nor loatheth and discountenanceth any person unaccountably: he doth utterly disclaim partiality, or respect of persons, as a calumnious aspersion on him, and a scandal to his providence.

Such in holy Scriptures he representeth himself, upon various occasions; declaring his perfect impartiality, and that nothing beside the right and reason of cases doth sway with him; all other considerations being impertinent and insignificant to him. For instance,

It is declared, that he hath no partial respect to nations; (Rom. x. 12. iii, 29.) for the piety of Job, an Edomite; of Melchisedeck, a Canaanite; of Jethro, a Midianite; were very pleasing to him: he favourably did hear the prayers and accept the alms of Cornelius, a Roman soldier; whereupon St. Peter made this general reflection: *Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.* (Acts x. 34, 35.)

He is declared not to regard the external profession of true religion, but real practice according to it: *He rendereth, saith St. Paul, to every man according to his deeds—tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for, addeth the Apostle, assigning the reason of this proceeding, there is no respect of persons with God.* (Gal. v. 6. vi. 15. iii. 28.) Col. iii. 11. Rom. ii. 6, 9, 10, 11. (x. 12. iii. 29.)

He is said not to respect faces, or any exterior appear-

SERM. ances, however specious in the eye of the world; according to that saying of God to Samuel, at the choice of
LXX.

1 Sam. xvi. 7. David before his brethren; *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart.*

It is expressed, that he hath no respect to the outward estate or worldly rank and dignity of men; but that princes and peasants, masters and servants, the honourable or wealthy, and the mean or poor, are of equal consideration with him; *He, saith Job, accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of his hands; and St. Paul biddeth masters to deal fairly with their servants, knowing, saith he, that your Master is also in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*

We are taught, that he doth not regard even the most sacred offices, or more worthy accomplishments of men, in prejudice to the verity of things, or equity of the case; for hence St. Paul maintaineth his resolute behaviour toward those great pillars of religion, St. Peter and St. James; *Of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person.*

It is frequently inculcated, that he hath no consideration of any gifts, of sacrifices, of services presented to him with sinister intent, to compound for sin, or excuse from duty, to pervert justice, or palliate wrong; according to that [declaration of Moses, *The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward; and that] charge of king Jehoshaphat to his judges, Let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed, and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts. And, Do not think, saith the Hebrew wise man, to corrupt (him) with gifts; for such he will not receive; and trust not to unrighteous sacrifices; for the Lord is judge, and with him is no respect of persons.*

Amos v. 21, 22.
Jer. vi. 20. Mic. vi. 7, 8. Hof. vi. 6.) Rom. ii. 11.

In fine, it is often generally declared, that God impartially dispenseth recompenses, in just proportion, according to the deeds of men: *He, saith St. Paul, that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons: And if, saith St. Peter, ye call upon the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourn here in fear.*

There is nothing more frequently asserted, or more seriously urged in holy Scripture, than this point, that God will judge and deal with men, not according to his absolute, antecedent affections, but according to their own works, or the tenor of their practice, duly scanned and estimated by the rules of justice; so that the really better man will certainly prove the happier, and the worse man shall be the more wretched: *He will reward every man, saith our Lord, κατὰ τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν αὐτοῦ, according to his practice: Every one, saith St. Paul, shall receive the things done in his body; ὑπὸς τὰ ἔργα, suitably (in just proportion) to his works; and each man shall receive τὸν μισθόν, his own wages according to his own labour; and then praise (or a due taxation) shall be to every man from God: Behold, saith he in the Revelation, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to recompense each man ὡς τὰ αὐτοῦ ἔργον ἔσται, as his work shall be.*

Wherefore by sacred testimonies it is abundantly manifest, that impartiality is a divine attribute and perfection of God; the which (for our greater satisfaction, and farther illustration of the point) may be also evinced by divers arguments, some proving that it must be so, others shewing that it is so; some inferring it *a priori*, from the prime, most avowed attributes of God's nature, and from his relations to men; others arguing it *a posteriori*, from principal instances of God's proceedings and providential dispensations toward men.

Of the first sort are these:

1. God is impartial, because he is perfectly wise, and thence doth truly estimate persons and things.

Wisdom doth look evenly, with a free and pure (an in-

SERM.
LXX.
Col. iii. 25.

1 Pet. i. 17.

Math. xvi.

27.

Rom. ii. 6.

Rev. ii.

23. xx. 12.

2 Cor. v. 10.

1 Cor. iiii. 8.

(Jer. xvii.

10.

xxxii. 19.

Pi. lxii. 12.)

1 Cor. iv. 5.

Rev. xxii.

12.

Ἀποδόσει

ἰσότη.

SERM. different and uncorrupt) eye upon all things; apprehending and esteeming each as it is in itself; making no distinction where it findeth none; not preferring one thing before another, without ground of difference in them. It doth not fix a valuation on its objects, but acknowledgeth it, and taketh it for such as it is in themselves.

LXX.

Wherefore God cannot have any blind affection or fondness toward any person grounded on no reason, or upon any unaccountable prejudice. No person can seem amiable or odious to him, who is not in himself truly such.

This argument is often used in Scripture; and to assure us of this truth, it is there frequently affirmed, that God doth search the hearts, doth try the spirits, doth weigh the actions of men: *The Lord, said Hannah, is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed: All the ways of man, saith Solomon, are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits: His eyes, saith the Psalmist, behold, his eyelids try the children of men: And, O Lord of hosts, saith Jeremiah, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart—Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: [I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.]*

1 Sam. ii.
3.
Prov. xvi.
2.

Psal. xi. 4.
Jer. xi. 20.
xx. 12.

Jer. xxxii.
19.

Jer. xvii.
10.

2. God cannot be partial, because he is perfectly righteous, just, and holy. This reason adjoined to the former doth make up a complete demonstration: for partiality doth proceed either from blindness of mind, or from perverseness of will; he, therefore, who hath both an exact knowledge of things, and a perfect rectitude of will, can nowise be partial; the one enabling him to judge, the other disposing him to affect things as they are and deserve; to esteem and love that which is indeed worthy and lovely; to despise and dislike that which is despicable and odious; to have no opinion or affection toward a person, abstracted from all qualifications; such an one being no special object of a wise and just either esteem or contempt, love or hatred.

As these causes are always inseparably connected, (for what is justness, but a disposition of will to follow, without defection, the dictates of wisdom?) so the effect must necessarily follow; according to numberless testimonies in Scripture, importing, that *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth: The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous—but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.*

SERM.
LXX

Psal. xi. 7.
(vil. 11,
xxxiii. 5,
xlv. 7.
cxlvi. 8.)
Psal. xi. 5.

3. God is impartial, because he is infinitely great and potent; whence all creatures are in the same degree inferior, at the same distance remote from him; all are equally at his discretion and disposal; he hath no need of any: what therefore should incline him to regard one before another, excepting only goodness, wherein he delighteth? So the Wise Man discourseth, *He that is Lord of all shall fear no man's person; neither shall he stand in awe of any man's greatness; for he hath made the small and great, and careth for all alike.* So Moses did imply, *The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons.*

v. 5.
Psal. xxxiv.
15, 16.

Wisd. vi. 7.

Deut. x. 17.

4. God is impartial, because he is immensely good and benign; both intensively in the degree, and extensively as to the objects of his goodness; so that he favoureth all equally, because all thoroughly, so far as may well be according to their condition and capacity; whence if there be any difference or defect, the ground thereof is not in his nature or will, but in the different qualifications of creatures.

Exod. xxiv.
6, 7.
Numb. xiv.
18.
Pf. lxxxvi.
5, 15. ciii.
8. cxlv. 8.

There is a double goodness, or love of God; one absolute, preceding all regard to personal qualities, or deeds; the other conditionate, and consequent on special regards: in both these God is impartial; for the first is general and unconfined, according to that of the Psalmist, *The Lord is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works;* and those sayings in the Gospel, *He is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil: He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.* The second is grounded on special reasons of the case; and

Pf. cxlv. 9.
16.

Luke vi. 35.

Matt. v. 45.

SERM. adapted to the rules of justice demanding it; according
LXX. whereto, *The Lord is rich (in mercy) toward all that call upon him. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him, and preserveth all them that love him.*

Rom. x. 12.
Pf. cxlv. 18.
xxxiv. 15.
cxlv. 19, 20.
xxxiv. 9.
xxxiii. 18.
 In the first there is no difference; in the second the difference is made by ourselves, being founded in our voluntary demeanour.

5. God is impartial toward all persons, because he hath the same (natural and original) relations toward all.

1. He is the maker and father of all; according to that
Mal. ii. 10. of the Prophet, *Have we not all one father? Hath not one*
Ephes. iv. 6. *God created us?* and that of the Apostle, *There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all:* he therefore hath the same parental kindness toward all, the same tenderness for the good of each; he is not capable of that imperfection, which is observable in some parents, to be fond and indulgent to some children above others; but in his affection *the rich and poor, as the Wise Man saith, do meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all.*

Job xxxiv. 19. Hence Job did collect that *God accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for, saith he, they are all the work of his hands.*

Job xxxi. 19, 14, 15. Hence the same holy man did infer, that he was obliged to deal fairly with his own servants, for that God in judgment would consider their case no less than his, upon this account, for, *Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?*

Hence the Wise Man, who imitated Solomon, did argue an equality of gracious providence toward all; *He hath made the small and the great, and careth for all alike.*

2. God is the common Lord of all; and therefore is concerned to protect all with the like care, to govern all with the same equity.

Hence St. Paul gathereth, that God is indifferently willing to shew mercy and dispense blessings to all people; to confer the means of salvation, and to accept pious endeavours, without distinction of Jew or Gentile; *Is he, saith he, the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the*

Rom. iii. 29.

Gentiles? And, *There is therefore no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.* SERM. LXX.

Rom. x. 12.

Hence the same Apostle doth urge masters to be just and kind to their servants; for that God, as the common master, hath an equal respect to both; *knowing that your Master also is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.* Ephes. vi. 9.

3. God is the Saviour of all; desiring and designing that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; being willing that no man should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 1 Tim. iv. 10. ii. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 9.

Wherefore out of philanthropy and love to mankind he sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world; to give himself a ransom for all men, to taste death for every man. Tit. ii. 11. 1 John iv. 14.

And what greater instance could there be of perfect impartiality? Luke ix. 56. John iii. 17. xii. 47. 2 Cor. v. 19.

So by reasons from the principal attributes and relations of God his impartiality may be deduced: the same also may be declared from his proceedings and dealings with men. For, 1 Tim. ii. 6. Heb. ii. 9.

1. God hath proposed to all men indifferently the same terms and conditions of obtaining his love and favour, of enjoying his bounty and mercy, of obtaining rewards and felicity from him. Clem. Præd. 4.

The same laws and rules of life are prescribed to all persons, as men, and as Christians.

The natural dictates of reason, the precepts of holy Scripture, the great moral duties of religion, by observance whereof God's favour is retained, and salvation assured, are of general concern and common obligation to all without exception.

God hath not framed one Law, or one Gospel, for princes and great men, another for peasants and mean artificers; he hath not chalked out one way toward heaven for the rich, another for the poor to walk in; but all, *high and low, rich and poor, one with another*, are tied to observe the precepts of piety, of charity, of justice, of temperance, sobriety and chastity, of modesty, humility; Psal. xlix.

SERM. and patience; none, great or small, can otherwise, than by
LXX. proceeding in the common road of virtuous practice, arrive to happiness.

Matth. vii. 21. *He that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Matth. xix. *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments:*

17. vii. 18. *Enter in through the strait gate: Blessed are they that do*

Luke xiii. *his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of*

24. *life: To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing*

Psal. xxxiv. *seek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life will be*

Rev. xxii. *conferred: these are the grand infallible maxims, the*

14. *fixed irreverfible decrees, expreffing the general duty and*

Rom. ii. 7. *doom of mankind, according to the eternal reason of*

things, and the declared will of God Almighty, our fo-

vereign governor and judge.

John xv. *Whoever it is, that will please God, that will have his*

14. *love, that will be happy by his grace, must humbly sub-*

mit to God's will, must faithfully obey God's laws, must

carefully walk in God's way; from this course there can

be no exemption, no dispensation, no special privilege for

any person whatever.

As all men naturally, by indifoluble bands of obliga-

tion, are the fubjects and fervants of God; fo God indif-

penfably and inexcufably doth require the fame loyalty

and fidelity, the fame diligence, the fame reverence from

all.

Great men fometimes may live, as if they conceived

themselves free from the obligations which bind other

men; as if they had not fouls (as we poor mortals have)

to be faved, or were to be faved in fome other way; as if

obedience to the divine laws doth not touch them, but

only doth belong to the commonalty; as if they had fpe-

cial indulgence to live in pride, luxury, and floth, might

warrantably praftife injuftice, oppreffion, revenge; might

cum privilegio be lewd and lascivious, withhold their

debts, take God's name in vain, neglect devotion and the

fervice of God: but in thus doing they much abufe them-

selves; for they no lefs than others are obnoxious to guilt

and to punifhment, for fuch mifdemaneors againft the di-

vine laws. In truth, if there be any difference in the cafe,

it is only this; that they, in all equity, ingenuity, and gratitude, are obliged to a more strict, more faithful, more diligent observance of God's laws; they being more indebted to God for his special bounty to them; they having larger talents and advantages committed to their trust, their deportment being of higher consequence, and most influential on the world, they being liable to render an account according to that just rule, *Unto whom much is given, of him much shall be required*; whence their eminency of condition doth not excuse them from common duties, but doth advance their obligation, will aggravate their neglect, will inflame their reckoning, will plunge them deeper into woful punishment; according to that of the Wise Man, *A sharp judgment shall be to them that are in high places; for mercy will soon pardon the meanest, but mighty men shall be mightily tormented.* Luke xii. 48. Wisd. vi. 3.

2. All persons have the same means, the same aids, the same supports afforded to them, for ability to perform their duty, and attain their happiness.

The word of God, as the light of heaven, doth indifferently shine to all men, for instructing their minds, for directing their practice, for guiding their feet in the way of peace.

The divine grace is ever at hand, ready to assist all those who sincerely and seriously do apply themselves to serve God.

Seasonable comforts are never wanting to support those who need them, and who in their distress seek them from God; who *healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*; so that when the poor man crieth, the Lord *heareth him, and saveth him out of his troubles.* Pf. cxlvii. 3. (cxlvi. 7.) Pf. xxxiv. 6.

The universal good Spirit of God (the fountain of light and wisdom, of spiritual power and strength, of consolation and joy) is communicated according to the needs of men, and exigencies of occasion; preventing them by direction to the right way, by reclaiming them from ill courses, by exciting in them good thoughts and good desires; quickening their good resolutions, and assisting in the pursuit of them; enabling them to resist temptations, and to combat

SERM. with their spiritual adversaries: to such best purposes the
LXX. holy Spirit is given to all in needful seasons and measures;
Luke xi. 13. especially to those who do earnestly seek it, do faithfully use it, do treat it well.

3. God hath provided, and doth propose to all men the same encouragements for obedience, the same punishments for transgression; the which being the same in kind do only differ in degree, proportionably to the good deeds or bad demerits of persons.

God hath appointed one heaven for all pious and virtuous persons, of what nation, of what rank, of what condition soever they are; he hath *prepared those things, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived, for all that love him.* For all that have fought the good fight, and kept the faith, and love his appearance, the Lord, the righteous Judge, hath laid up a crown of righteousness.

Luke xxii. 29. Immortality of life, an unfading crown of glory, a kingdom that cannot be shaken, unspeakable joys, endless bliss, God hath covenanted and promised to all his faithful servants; to all who in his way please to accept and embrace them; *ὁ δίδωμι, He that willet, let him take of the water of life freely:* and what greater rewards could there be assigned? What room is there for partiality, where all are capable of the same equally great, because in a manner immense felicity? *Many, saith our Saviour, shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, and with Isaac, and with Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.*

Lazarus, the poor beggar, shall rest with the illustrious Moses, and the noble Daniel, with David, and Hezekiah, and Josiah, and all pious princes, in the bosom of Abraham. The poor fishermen, the painful tent-makers, the sorry publicans, shall reign together with Constantine, and Theodosius, and all those good princes, who have faithfully served God, and promoted his glory. The rich, well using their wealth, may obtain that state, *treasuring up to themselves a good foundation against the time to come,*

1 Tim. vi. 19.
Luke xii. 35. **xvi. 9.**

that they may lay hold on eternal life: the poor, content- **SERM.**
 edly bearing their condition, have a good title thereto, **LXX.**
 expressed in those words, *Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the* **Luke vi. 20.**
kingdom of God.

On the other hand, the same dismal punishments are threatened to all presumptuous, contumacious, and impudent transgressors of God's law, however dignified or distinguished; be they princes or subjects, noble or base, wealthy or indigent; the same unquenchable fire, the same gnawing worm, the same weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth; the same utter darkness; the same burning lake of brimstone; the same extreme disconsolate anguish is reserved for them all: *Depart from me; Go ye* **Matt. vii.**
curled into everlasting fire, will be the doom pronounced **23. xxv. 41.**
on all the workers of iniquity; Indignation and wrath, **Luke xiii.**
tribulation and anguish, will be upon every soul that doeth **27.**
evil. **Rom. ii. 8.**

No regard will be had to the quality of men in this world; for *the rich man, who was clothed in purple and* **Luke xvi.**
fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, was not ex- **19, 23.**
cluded from hell and torment: there is a Tophet ordained **Jam. v. 1.**
of old, even for kings; mighty men shall be mightily tor- **Luke vi. 24.**
mented, if they have mightily sinned. **16. xxx. 33.**
Wisd. vi. 6.

Even present encouragements of virtue in this life, the joys and comforts of God's holy Spirit, the sweet elapses of spiritual consolation in devotion, *the peace of God,* and delicious sense of his love, the cheerful satisfaction of a good conscience, the *joy in believing* God's truth, and hoping for accomplishment of his promises, the delight in obeying God's commandments, the blessing of God upon good undertakings, and happy success therein, the *co-* **Pf. xxxvii.**
operation of all things for good to them who love God, the **4, 5. i. 3.**
supply of all wants, and satisfaction of all desires, the **Rom. viii.**
experimental assurance of God's constant protection and **28.**
gracious providence over those who fear him and trust in **Pf. cxlv.**
him, (according to numberless declarations and promises **19. xxxvii.**
in holy Scripture,) are indifferently dispensed to all, who **4. xxxiv. 10.**
shall use the means to attain them, in way of conscientious practice.

SERM. LXX. As correspondently the temporal discouragements from sin (crosses, disappointments, vexations, miseries) are without exception allotted to all transgressors of God's law, according to many denunciations therein.

Pf. xi. 6.
lxxiii. 19.
xxxii. 10.
Isa. xlviii.
22. lvii. 20.
liv. 17.

4. The impartiality of God doth appear from his universal providence, carefully watching over all and every person, dispensing good things to each, according to his need, without distinction*.

Is any man in extreme want? his liberal hand presently doth reach forth a supply; for, *He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness; He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.*

Pf. cvii. 9.
Pf. cxlv. 16.

Is any man in distress? the Lord is ready to afford relief; according to that repeated burden of the 107th Psalm: *Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.*

Pf. cvii. 6/
18, 19, 28.
xxxiv. 6.
cxlvi. 7.
cxlvii. 6.
ciii. 8.
cvi. 8. 44.
lxxviii. 38.

Is any man engaged in sin and guilt? He is patient and long suffering; not pouring forth his anger, not withholding his mercies; letting his sun arise and his showers descend upon the most unworthy and ungrateful: this he doth so generally, that commonly by apparent events it is not easily discernible to whom God beareth special favour; according to that observation of the Preacher, *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them; all things coming alike to all.* How then can any man complain of partiality in him, who exerciseth so unconfined bounty, clemency, and patience?

Ecc. ix. 1, 2.

If there be any considerable difference, it is only this, that God hath a peculiar care of the poor, the afflicted, the oppressed, the helpless and disconsolate, who do most need (and thence are most induced to seek) his succour and comfort; being also commonly better qualified to receive them; as is frequently declared in Scripture.

Pf. cxlvi. 9.
cxlvii. 14.
ix. 9.
xxxiv. 18.
Is. xlv. 4.

It is true, that God hath his particular friends, his favourites, his privados, whom he doth specially regard and

* Bonus omnipotens ita curat universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos. *Aug. Conf.*

cóuntertance; upon whom he conferreth extraordinary SERM.
 boons and graces; namely, those who do love, who do LXX.
 fear, who do trust in, who do honour him, who do obey
 him; concerning whom it is said, *We know that all things* Rom. viii.
work together for good to them that love God: and, The 28.
Lord preserveth all those that love him: There is no want Pf. cxlv. 20.
to them that fear him: He will fulfil the desire of them xxxi. 23.
that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save xxiv. 9.
them: The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants, and cxlv. 19.
none of them that trust in him shall be desolate: Them that xxxiv. 22.
honour me, I will honour: The Lord loveth the righteous: Pf. cxlvi. 8.
The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears xxxiv. 15.
are open unto their cry: Ye are my friends, if ye do what- John xv. 14.
soever I command you.

But evidently there is no partiality in this; for he doth not favour them irrespectively as persons, but as in justice specially qualified for favour; friendship, dutifulness, reverence toward him, being the highest virtues, and arguing a mind endued with dispositions (with equity, with ingenuity, with gratitude, with sober wisdom, with love of truth and goodness) which demand a correspondence of love and respect from God himself. And as we do not hold a man partial, who beareth a special affection and regard to those, who express good-will, who deal kindly and fairly with them, who serve them faithfully, and pay them due respect; so neither is God partial, if he doth specially bless good men upon the like accounts.

Especially considering, that God doth not so favour mere pretenders, who profess to love and honour him, but do not love true goodness; fond, superstitious, hypocritical people, who call, *Lord, Lord*, but practise iniquity; who think to please him by affected services; who court and flatter him with their lips; who would bribe him with their gifts and sacrifices. Matt. vii. 22.
Luke vi. 46.
Tit. i. 16.
Matt. xv. 9.
Col. ii. 22.
Matt. xv. 8.

5. All Christians, without distinction, have the same illustrious relations and honourable privileges, the most great and glorious that can be imagined.

Of what greater honour is a man capable, than to be

SERM. adopted into the blood royal of heaven, *to be called to be*
 LXX. one of the sons of God? *Ye are all the sons of God by*
 (Col. iii. 11.) *faith in Christ Jesus. God sent forth his Son, born of a*
 1 Cor. xii. 13. *woman, that he might redeem us—and that we might re-*
 Gal. iii. 26, *ceive the adoption of sons.*
 28. iv. 4, 5.

Rom. viii. 14. *Ἰδετε ωσαντων ἀγαπᾶν* Behold, saith St. John, *what love*
 1 John iii. 1. *the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons*
 John i. 12. *of God. This is a privilege, which God hath given, which*
 Gal. iv. *Christ hath purchased for us all. And whosoever received*
him, he gave them ἐξουσίαν ταύτων, (this power, this privi-
lege, this advantage,) that they should become the sons of God.

To what higher dignity can any one pretend, than to
 be heir of a kingdom, by the most infallible assurance that
 can be; by covenant, by promise of God? Such are all
 Rom. viii. good Christians, God's children; for *if sons, then heirs,*
 17. *saith the Apostle, heirs of God, coheirs with Christ: heirs*
 Gal. iv. 7. *of God's kingdom; for, Hearken, my beloved brethren,*
 Tit. iii. 7. *saith St. James; Hath not God chosen the poor of this*
 Heb. i. 14. *world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he*
 Jam. ii. 5. *hath promised to them that love him?*

Matt. xxv. *Inherit the kingdom prepared for you.*

34. *Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to*
 Luke xii. *give you a kingdom.*
 32.

Luke xxii. *I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath ap-*
 29. *pointed unto me.*

To what higher pitch can the most ambitious soul
 aspire, than to be a king?

Such, St. John saith, that our Lord hath constituted
 Rev. i. 6, 9. every good Christian; *partakers, not of a carnal, an*
 v. 10. *earthly, a temporal kingdom, (which is unstable, is sub-*
 2 Tim. iv. *ject to various chances and crosses, cannot endure long,*
 18. *or last any considerable time,) but of a spiritual, a celestial,*
 19. *an eternal kingdom, which cannot be shaken; which hath*
 2 Pet. i. 11. *continual rest, peace, joy.*
 20. *ἀνάπαυσις.*
 Heb. xii. 28. *ἀσάλευτος.*

1 Thess. ii. 12. *We are by God called unto his kingdom and glory,—*
 Col. i. 13. *translated into the kingdom of his own dear Son.*

To be the brethren of Christ; who is the sovereign
 Lord of glory, King of kings, and Lord of lords...

Is it not a considerable honour to be the friends of our Lord? So is every poor soul, which hath the conscience to serve him faithfully; for, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* SERM. LXX.
John xv. 14.

All are citizens, free denizens of the heavenly common-wealth; *συμμελοῦνται τῶν ἁγίων*——. Phil. iii. 20.
Heb. xiii. 20. xii. 22.
Eph. ii. 19.
Deut. x. 17.
(Col. iii. 25.)

6. All men are liable to the same judgment, at the same tribunal, before that one impartial, inflexible Judge, who cannot be corrupted with gifts, or dazzled with shews, or moved by any sinister regards.

All persons must stand before that bar upon equal ground; without any advantage; according to that representation of St. John; *I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened—and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* Apoc. ix. 12.

The greatest monarchs, the mightiest potentates, the most redoubtable warriors, and successful conquerors, (the men, who made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms,) that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; who affected to ascend into heaven, and to exalt his throne above the stars of God, to ascend above the heights of the clouds, and to be like the Most High. Is. xiv. 16.
v. 13, 14.
(v. 11.)

There shall they stand bare and divested of all their phantasmagry; their splendid pomp, their numerous retinue, their guards, their parasites.

No consideration there will be had of their windy titles, of their gay attire, and glittering pomp.

No respect will be had to the dread of their name, to the fame of their prowess; to that spurious glory, for which they unsettled mankind, and overturned the world; their actions will be strictly scanned according to the rules of God's law and common equity.

They will be put to answer for all the violences and outrages, for all the spoils and rapines, for all the blood and slaughters, for all the ruins, devastations, and desolations, their cruel ambition hath caused; for all the sins they have committed, and all the mischiefs they have done.

SERM. They who now have so many flatterers and adorers,
LXX. will not then find one advocate to plead for them.

Thus it may appear that God is impartial.

But there are divers obvious exceptions against this doctrine. As,

Obj. 1. Is it not apparent that the gifts of God are distributed with great inequality?

Doth not one swim in wealth and plenty, while another coucheth under the burden of extreme want and penury?

Are not some perched aloft in high dignity, while others crawl upon the ground, and grovel in despicable meanness?

Luke xvi. 19, 20. Are not some *clothed with purple and fine linen, and fare deliciously every day*; while others scarce find rags to cover them, and *lie at the door begging for relief*?

Do not some thrive and prosper in their affairs, while others are disappointed and crossed in their undertakings?

Psal. xvii. 10. lxxiii. 7. —xii. 6. Was it not truly observed of some persons, (and those least deserving good fortune,) *They are inclosed in their own fat—Their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish?*

Jer. xii. 1. And whence doth this difference come, but from God's hand? *Who*, as the Apostle asketh, *maketh thee to differ from another, but God, the disposer of all things?*

To this exception I answer:

Rom. viii. 18. *Δοκίμασι γὰρ οἱ θεοὶ ἀείμα*
2 Cor. iv. 17. 1. That temporal things are so inconsiderable, that they scarce deserve to come into the balance, or to be computed; for they have but the same proportion to spiritual things, as time hath to eternity; or a finite to an infinite; which is none at all.

Luke vi. 24. xvi. 25. Pf. xvii. 14. What partiality therefore is there, if God in mercy and patience bestow on bad men a farthing in the temporal *consolations* of this life, (if the universal Father give a small *portion in this life* to untoward children,) while he reserveth infinite millions for his obedient children?

2. The goods of fortune commonly are dispensed not by a special hand of God, but according to the general course of providence: and what partiality is he guilty of, who scattereth money into a crowd of poor people; al-

though in scrambling some get more than other; and often the worst (being most bold and fierce) do get most? SERM. LXX.

3. Indeed the receiving those gifts is no sign of God's special regard; as the Preacher well observed; *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.* Ecclef. ix. 1, 2.
All things come alike to all; there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.

4. God, as St. Austin saith, purposely doth sparingly deal these things to good men, and freely bestoweth them on bad men, to shew how little we ought to value them; how much inferior they are to spiritual goods. For surely he would give the best things to his friends, and the worst to his enemies.

5. Even temporal gifts are dispensed with a very even hand; for if, barring injudicious fancy and vulgar opinion, we rightly prize things, we compare the conveniences and inconveniences of each state, it will be hard to judge which hath the advantage.

Wealth hath more advantages for pleasure; but it hath also more cares, more fears, more crosses, more dangers, more troubles, more temptations.

It hath more plenty; but withal it hath less safety, less ease, less liberty, less quiet, less real enjoyment.

Set the distraction of the rich man's mind against the toil of the poorest man's body; the nauseous surfeits of one against the griping hunger of the other.

That which really doth constitute a state happy, content, may be common to both, or wanting to either, as the person is disposed.

6. The goods of fortune are not purely gifts, but talents deposited in trust for God's service, for which a proportionable return is expected; so that he that hath less of them, hath a less burden to bear, and an easier account to render.

7. Many gifts are not dispensed with personal regard, but for public good; and therefore all have an interest in them.

The wealth, the power, the reputation, the prosperity of a prince, of a nobleman, of a gentleman, are not his,

SERM. but his neighbour's; for governing, for protecting, for encouraging, for assisting whom, they are conferred: the world not being able to subsist in order and peace without subordinate ranks, and without answerable means to maintain them.

LXX.
 Luke i. 79. *Obj.* 2. It is apparent, that God dispenseth his grace,
 Matt. iv. 16. the light of knowledge, and means of salvation, very un-
 Eph. iv. 18. equally; some nations living in the clear sunshine of the
 ii. 1. Gospel, while others *sit in darkness and the shadow of*
 Tit. iii. 3. *death*; whole nations being detained in barbarous and
 1 Pet. iv. 3. brutish ignorance.

To answer this exception fully would require much discourse; it being a dark and difficult point: but briefly we may say,

1. That God dispenseth measures of grace according to a just, yet inscrutable wisdom, knowing what use will be made thereof, and what *fruit* men will *bear*. It may therefore be a favour not to dispense light to them, who are not prepared to embrace and improve it well.

2. No man can tell what God doth in preparation, and what obstructions are made by men to his grace.

3. As lower means of grace are conferred, so proportionably less returns are expected.

4. How hard soever it may be to descry the reason of God's proceedings in this case, yet assuredly it is just; and our ignorance of it should not prejudice the belief of those general truths, which are so plainly declared, concerning the universal benignity and impartial equity of God.

Obj. 3. Is it not in holy Scripture sometimes asserted, that God doth act arbitrarily and absolutely; dispensing his bounty and mercy without regard to any quality in men, or deed committed by them, either in whole, or in proportion—God saith, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*—and, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?*

Is not a plain instance of this dealing alleged by St. Paul concerning Jacob and Esau, that *before the children were born, or had done either good or evil, God said, The*

Rom. ix.
 13.
 Matt. xx.
 15.

Rom. ix.
 11, 12, 13.

elder shall serve the younger ; and in regard thereto, in the **SERM.**
Prophet, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated ? **LXX.**

We answer briefly, that

Such expressions do import, not that God acteth absolutely in the thing itself, but *quoad nos* ; not that he acteth without reason, but upon reasons (transcending our capacity, or our means to know it) incomprehensible or Rom. xi. undiscernible to us ; not that he can give no account, but is ^{23.} not obliged to render any to us ; that the methods of his providence commonly are inscrutable ; that his proceedings are not subject to our examination and censure ; that his acting doth sufficiently authorize and justify itself ; that it is high presumption and arrogance for us to scan, sift, or Rom. ix. contest, or cavil at the equity or wisdom of God's acting. ^{20.}

That God doth not act according to necessity, but is free in dispensing his mercy, and applying it to any person, so that they have nothing to challenge upon account of their own deserts or works ; but must refer all to his mere bounty.

However, there can be nothing in these mysteries of predestination and providence, which really doth subvert an assertion so often clearly expressed, and so well grounded in reason, or the consideration of God's nature, attributes, ordinary way of acting, &c.

Whatever expressions are repugnant thereto in sound, whatever instances (depending on occult causes) in appearance do cross it ; it yet must stand, that God is impartially merciful, benign, just, &c.

Obj. 4. Had not Jeremy, St. John Baptist, St. Paul, (Isa. xlix. absolute favours and graces conferred on them, who were ^{1. 5.)} *sanctified*, and separated from the womb to be prophets ^{Jer. i. 5.} and apostles ? ^{Luke i. 15.} ^{Gal. i. 15.}

Resp. These favours were in design not so much particular and personal, as general and public ; those persons ^{Jer. i. 10.} being raised up by God upon occasions as needful instruments ^{Luke i. 16.} (*elect vessels*) of his providence, to instruct men, and ^{Acts ix. 15.} to reduce them to God ; so that God, in raising up such ^{xvi. 16.} extraordinary persons, did express his common goodness to mankind.

SERM. The like may be said of that special favour, which was
 LXX. vouchsafed to the holy Virgin, who was *κεχαρισμένη*, and
*Χαίρεσσι μεχα-
ρισμένη.* *blest among women*, for the general good of mankind.

*Χαίρεσσι μεχα-
ρισμένη.*
 Luke i. 28. The consideration of this point is very useful, and may
 dispose us to many sorts of good practice.

1. No man should presume upon God's dealing with him more favourably than with others, as if he were a darling, or favourite; that God will indulge him in the commission of any thing prohibited, or in omission of any duty.

No man should indulge himself in any thing, upon a conceit, that God will indulge him, or oversee his errors; and that, in this sense, *He seeth not iniquity in Jacob*.

2. No man should be puffed up with conceit, that God hath a singular regard to him. For all such conceits are groundless and vain; in them men do miserably delude themselves.

1 John iii.
 19, 21. No man can otherwise find any assurance of God's special love to him, than upon a good conscience; testifying, that he doth sincerely love God, and endeavour faithfully to obey his commandments.

3. No man should despair of God's favour; seeing God hath no particular aversion from any; but every person hath the same grounds of hope.

If we can buckle our hearts to observe our duty, we may be sure to be accepted.

Gen. iv. 7. *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?*

4. No man should be discouraged for his condition, or fortune; since in allotting it to him God had no disfavour, nor did intend him ill.

God hath no less regard to him, than to persons of the most high, wealthy, prosperous state.

5. No man should repine, murmur, or complain of God's dealing, as if he were unkindly used, more than others: for there is no such thing. God dealeth alike kindly with all.

6. No man, upon account of his rank, wealth, or worldly advantages, should boast or pride himself; seeing thence he partaketh no more than his meanest and poorest neighbour, of the principal advantage, God's favour.

7. No man, upon such accounts, should despise his **SERM.**
 neighbour, *the brother of low degree*: for upon these ac- **LXX.**
 counts it appeareth, that the Wise Man saith truly, that Jam. i. 9.
He is void of wisdom who despiseth his neighbour; seeing 1^o τὰς ἀνθρώπων
 no man can be despicable, whom God regardeth; seeing Prov. xi. 12.
God, as Elihu saith, *is mighty, and despiseth not any*; see- xiv. 21.
 ing the meanest person standeth on equal terms with the Job xxxvi.
 greatest in the eye of God. 5. (Jam. ii. 6.)

8. Great men should not take themselves for another Quorum fa-
 sort of creatures, or another race of men than their poor tis cœlum
 neighbours; that the world is theirs, and all things are omne vaca-
 for them; that they may do what they please; that they vit. Luc.
 are exempted from laws, which oblige others; for in lib. vii.
 moral and spiritual accounts they are upon a level with
 others.

They are but fellow-subjects and fellow-servants with
 others; all accountable to the same Master.

9. Superiors hence should be moved to deal fairly,
 gently, and courteously with inferiors; seeing these are
 their fellow-servants, equally considerable as themselves
 with the great Master of the family.

This is the use, to which St. Paul applieth the con-
 sideration:

Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and Col. iv. 1.
equal, knowing that ye have a Master in heaven— iii. ult.
Ye masters, do the same things unto them, (that is, be Ephes. vi. 9.
 conscientiously good to them, as they are faithful to
 you,) *forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master*
also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with
him.

10. This consideration should preserve us from supersti-
 tion, or thinking to please or satisfy God, win his favour,
 or appease his displeasure, by uncouth ways, which he
 hath not prescribed to all men; to corrupt him by our
 sacrifices and oblations; our flatteries, glozings, col-
 loguings with him; so that he will indulge us in any bad
 thing, or excuse us from our true duty, in regard to those
 affected services.

We do herein but abuse ourselves; for he will not ap- Coloss. ii.
Mic. vi. 7, 8.

SERM. prove or accept us upon any other account, than of dis-
LXX. charging our duty, being truly righteous and good.

11. It is matter of comfort and satisfaction to a man, who is conscious of his sincerity, that (whatever his condition and circumstances be) God will have a fair regard thereto, and will not reject him.

Job xxxi. 4, 6. *It was so to Job; Doth not God see my ways, and count all my steps?—Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know my integrity.*

Jam. ii. 1, 9. 12. The consideration of this point should keep us from
 Prov. xxviii. 21. partial respects of men.

Not to admire the state of great men, nor to yield them undue deferences, (in prejudice to meaner persons, making greater difference than there is ground for,) not to flatter or humour them in an immoderate measure, or unbeseeming manner.

Οὐ μίλας τοῖς
 πλείοσι ὑβρίεις.
 Matt. xxii.

16.
 Θανατίζουσιν
 τὸ πνεῦμα.
 Jude 16.

Levit. xix. 15.

Deut. i. 17. xvi. 19.

Prov. xxiv. 23. xvi. 5.
 xxviii. 21.

This is that which St. James doth urge in his second chapter, as a very unequal thing.

We should imitate God; we should consider that our opinions and affections should resemble his.

As in exterior judgment no respect is to be had to the rich above the poor; so neither in the interior judgment or esteem of our mind; to which St. James seemeth to apply the law; *If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.*

Jam. ii. 9.

13. This should keep us from envying at those who have more worldly advantages.

14. It should keep us from being offended, or scandalized, or perverted into false notions of God, upon occasion of any mysterious points, or hard expressions importing absolute and arbitrary proceedings of God, in predestination or providence. For however they are to be understood, they cannot derogate from the impartial goodness and justice of God.

15. This consideration should engage us readily to pay due respect and reverence to princes, to magistrates, to all our superiors.

For hence we see, that the reason why we are commanded to honour and fear them, is, not their worldly

grandeur of wealth or power, (things of small consideration with God;) but it standeth on a more solid ground, their sacred relations to God, as his representatives and officers; who in his name and behalf do administer justice, and protect right and innocence, encourage virtue, maintain order and peace in the world.

Though God doth not favour their persons as rich and mighty; yet he regardeth his own character imprinted on them; he regardeth his honour and interest concerned in their respect; he regardeth the public good of mankind, which they are constituted to promote: he considers them as the *ministers of his kingdom*, and instruments of conveying his benefits to mankind.

Whence he *giveth salvation to kings*; he by his law, and by his providence, doth guard and secure them from violence, from contempt, from disrespect.

In honouring them, we honour the authority of God, and the character of divinity stamped on them; we serve ourselves, for whose sake they are constituted, for whose good they watch. Rom. xiv. 4. Eia & ya Sin.

It may also engage us the more gladly and fully to yield them their due respect, to consider, that their condition is not invidious, or their case better than other men's; seeing they are accountable to God for the advantages of it; seeing that God hath no regard to them upon account of that greatness which dazzleth our eyes; seeing that for all the burdens they sustain, for all the cares they take, for all the pains they endure, for our good and public service, they can receive so inconsiderable a recompense from us.

Finally, it should engage us to be very careful of our ways, and diligent in our obedience; seeing there is no other way possible of pleasing God, of gaining his favour and friendship, of appeasing his displeasure, of standing upright, and coming off well in his judgment; this is St. Peter's inference, with which I conclude.

If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. 1 Pet. i. 17.

SERMON LXXI.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

I TIM. iv. 10.

—*The living God ; who is the Saviour of all men,
especially of those that believe.*

SERM. LXXI. **T**HERE are two points of doctrine here plainly asserted by St. Paul, which I shall endeavour to explain and to apply : one, that God is the Saviour of all men ; another, that he is peculiarly the Saviour of the faithful^a. For the first,

God in many respects may truly be conceived and called *the Saviour of all men* ; for the word *save* doth in a large acception denote the conferring any kind of good ; as implying a removal of need, or indigence. Whence God *is the Saviour of all men*, as the universal preserver and upholder of all things in their being and natural state, as ^{6.} Old Transl. and the **LXX.** *εὐεργετὴς*, or *εὐεργετὴς*, as the general benefactor, who is good to all, and whose **Psal. cxlv.** *mercies are over all his works ; who maketh his sun to rise* ^{9.} **Matt. v. 45.** *upon the good and bad, rains upon the just and unjust, is* **Luke vi. 35.** *kind and benign even to the ungrateful and evil : or, as the common assistant, protector, and deliverer of all men, who in need or distress have recourse unto him for succour and relief, according to what is said in the Psalms ;*

^a Οὗ γὰρ πολλὰν ἔχοντες, ἵφ' οἷς θαυμάζονται, ἔστιν αὐτός, ὡς πρὸ πάντων ἐνεργετὴν ἰδιώτατον. Naz. Orat. 26.

The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him. They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses. SERM. LXXI.
Psal. ix. 9.
cxlv. 18.
cxlvi. 7, &c.
cvii. 13, &c.
lxviii. 19,
20.

In these kinds of senses, especially respecting natural and temporal good, it is manifest that *God is the Saviour of all men*. But that he is in this place termed such in a higher sense, with regard to mercies and blessings of a more excellent kind, and greater consequence, (to mercies and blessings of a spiritual nature, and relating to the eternal state of men,) may from several considerations appear.

1. For that according to apostolical use the words *Saviour, Save, Salvation*, are wont to bear an evangelical sense, relating to the benefits by our Lord Jesus Christ procured, purchased, and dispensed, concerning the future state of men.

2. For that questionless St. Paul doth here intend God to be *Saviour* of the faithful in this higher sense, and consequently he means him in the same sense (although not in the same degree and measure, or not altogether to the same effects and purposes) a *Saviour of all men*.

3. Because it is plain, that in other places of Scripture, like and parallel to this, such a sense is designed. As, where, in this very Epistle, we are enjoined to *pray for all men*, for this reason; *For, saith St. Paul, this is good and acceptable before God our Saviour, who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge* (or acknowledgment) *of the truth*; where *σωτήρ ἡμῶν*, the *Saviour of us*, seems to denote the Saviour of *us as men*, (that interpretation best suiting with the argument St. Paul useth,) however it is expressed that God is, according to desire or intention, the Saviour of all men, in reference to their spiritual and eternal advantage; as willing that all men should embrace the Gospel; which is farther most evidently confirmed by the words immediately following; *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*.

4. Because, according to the tenor of Scripture, and the analogy of Christian doctrine, St. Paul's assertion

SERM. thus interpreted is true, as our subsequent discourse may LXXI. declare.

1 Tim. i. 1. 5. I might add, that *the living God* in our text may
 ii. 3. very well be understood and expounded to be our Lord
 2 Tim. i. 10. Jesus himself; not only as partaking of the divine nature,
 Tit. ii. 10, but as exhibited in the Gospel, the Word incarnate, who
 19. iii. 4. as such may seem commonly by St. Paul to be styled,
 i. 8. *God our Saviour; God manifested in the flesh; God, that*
 1 Tim. iii. 16. *purchased the Church with his own blood; Christ, who is*
 Acts xx. 28. *over all, God blessed for evermore.* However it from the
 Rom. ix. 5. premises is sufficiently apparent, that God's being *the Sa-*
vour of all men doth relate unto our Saviour Jesus his un-
 dertakings and performances for the salvation of all men;
 since God in a sense evangelical is no otherwise said to
 save, than in concurrence with what Jesus did undertake
 and perform; than as designing, ordering, accepting, pro-
 secuting, and accomplishing our Lord's performances;
 Jesus being the conduit through which all evangelical
 mercies and blessings are from God conveyed and dispen-
 sed to mankind. So that God being *the Saviour of man-*
 Eph. i. 3, 6. *kind*, is either directly and immediately, or by equiva-
 lence and in consequence, the same with Jesus being *the*
Saviour of all men.

That our Lord Jesus is *the Saviour of all men*; or that
 the most signal of his saving performances do in their na-
 ture and their design respect all men, as meant for, as
 conducing and tending to all men's salvation, yea and as
 in their own nature (supposing men's due and possible
 concurrence with them) effectually productive of their sal-
 vation; that, I say, this ancient catholic point of doctrine
 (the which we profess to believe, when with the Church
 we say in the Nicene Creed—*Who for us men, and for our*
salvation, came down from heaven, and the which par-
ticularly our Church in its Catechism, in the Ministration
of Baptism, and in the Communion, doth most evidently
and expressly declare itself to embrace) is very true,
 many full and clear testimonies of Scripture do shew,
 many reasons grounded on Scripture do prove; the which
 we shall first touch, and then further both illustrate and

enforce the truth, by declaring upon what accounts, or **SERM.**
in what respects our Lord is the Saviour of all men; as **LXXI.**
also by an application to practice, declarative of its usefulness and subserviency to the purposes of piety. For immediate testimonies:

1. Jesus is called the *Saviour* of the world; who was sent and came into the world to save the world; whose chief performances were designed and directed to the salvation of the world; *We have heard and known*, said the John iv. 42. men of Samaria, *that this is truly the Saviour of the world, the Christ.* *We have seen and testified*, saith St. John, *that* 1 John iv. 14. *the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world,* (that world, of which it is said, *He was in the world, and* John i. 10. *the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*) And, *God sent his Son into the world, not to judge* (or not John iii. 17. *to condemn*) *the world, but that the world by him should be* xiii. 47. *saved*, (that world, whereof a great part he in effect would John v. 22. *both judge and condemn for unbelief and disobedience,* Acts x. 42. *he did come primarily upon intent to save.*) And, *The* xvii. 31. *bread which I shall give is*, saith he, *my flesh, which I will* Rom. xiv. 10. *give for the life of the world.* And, *Behold*, said the 2 Cor. v. 10. *Baptist, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the* John vi. 51. *world.* And, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto* John i. 29. *himself, not imputing their offences*, saith St. Paul, *to the* 2 Cor. v. 19. *world, which otherwise he expresseth by τὰ πάντα, by him* Coloss. i. 20. *to reconcile all things unto himself.* And, *He is a propitiation* 1 John ii. 2. *not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole* *world, (the whole world, in contradistinction from all* *Christians, to whom St. John speaketh in that place of* *his Catholic Epistle; that κόσμος ὅλος, of which he saith in* *that same Epistle, κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ καίρῳ, the whole* 1 John. v. 19. *world lieth in wickedness.)* In all which places that the world according to its ordinary acception (and as every man would take it at first hearing) doth signify the whole community of mankind, comprehending men of all sorts and qualities, good and bad, believers and infidels, (not in a new, unusual sense, any special restrained world of some persons, particularly regarded or qualified,) will, I suppose, easily appear to him, who shall without prejudice or

SERM. LXXI. partiality attend to the common use thereof in Scripture, especially in St. John, who most frequently applieth it as to this, so to other cases or matters.

2. The object of our Saviour's undertakings and intentions is described by qualities and circumstances agreeing unto all men. All the sons of Adam are by disobedience in a lost condition, (lost in error and sin, lost in guilt and condemnation, lost in trouble and misery;) and, *The Son of man*, saith he himself, *came to save*, τὸ ἀπολωλός, *that which was lost*, (or whatever was lost.) *All men have sinned*; saith St. Paul, *and are fallen short of the glory of God*; and, *It is a faithful saying*, saith the same Apostle, *and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*. God commended his love to us, *that we being yet sinners Christ died for us*. All men naturally are weak, and wicked; are in a state of alienation and enmity toward God: and, *Even when we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly: When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: Christ once suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous*. All men have souls and lives exposed to misery and ruin: and, *The Son of man*, so he assures us, *came not to destroy, but to save the souls* (or lives) of men. Those propositions in form, respecting an indefinite object, are according to vulgar use equipollent to those, wherein the object is expressed universally. However,

3. They are interpreted by others, expressed in terms as general and comprehensive as can be; such as these texts contain: *The living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful*, (of all men universally, not only of the faithful, though chiefly of them,) *God our Saviour would have all men to be saved; He is the mediator of God and men, who gave himself a ransom for all men; God hath shut up all men under sin; that he might have mercy upon all. The love of Christ constraineth us, judging this, that if one died for all, then are all dead; and he died for all, that they who live may not live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again*. *The saving grace of God hath appeared to all men*, (or the

grace of God, which is saving to all men, hath appeared, **SERM.**
ἐπεφάνη ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις.) **LXXI.**
death (ὕπὲρ πάντων) for every man. He is the true light, Heb. ii. 9,
that enlighteneth every man coming into the world. Which 10.
 propositions do sufficiently determine the extent of our John i. 9.
 Saviour's saving performances.

4. Farther yet, to exclude any limitation or diminution of these so general terms, (at least to exclude any limitation in regard to all the members of the visible Church, which are or have been incorporated therein,) it is expressed, that our Saviour's undertakings did respect even those, who (by their own default) might lose the benefit of them, and who in effect should not be saved. For, of those false teachers, who introduced *pernicious heresies*, it 2 Pet. ii. 1. is said, that *they denied the Lord who bought them*^b. And St. Paul implies, that by scandalous example *a weak brother, for whom Christ died*, being induced to sin, might be destroyed. *And by thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?* And, *Do not, faith he* 1 Cor. viii. 11.
again, by thy eating destroy him, for whom Christ died. 15. Rom. xiv. 15.
 And the Apostle to the Hebrews signifies concerning apostates, that they do *trample upon the Son of God, and* Heb. x. 29.
pollute the blood of Christ, by which they are sanctified.

5. The supposition thereof is the ground of duty, and an aggravation of sin.

Thus doth the holy Scripture in terms very direct and express declare this truth, indeed so clearly and fully, that scarce any other point of Christian doctrine can allege more ample or plain testimony of Scripture for it; whence it is wonderful, that any pretending reverence to Scripture should dare (upon consequences of their own devising) to question it; and many reasons confirming the same may be deduced thence.

1. ^cThe impulsive cause, which moved God to design the sending our Lord for to undertake what he did, is expressed to be philanthropy, or love to mankind:

^b Væ illis, qui auctorem propriæ salutis negaverunt. *Ambr. Pl. xxxix.*

^c Greg. Naz. faith of Julian, διὰ τοῦτο μισήσας Χριστὸν, ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ σώζεται. *Athan. Orat. 32.*

SERM. But, saith St. Paul, *when the kindness and love of God our LXXI. Saviour unto man appeared—according to his mercy he saved*

Tit. iii. 4.

ἡ φιλανθρω-
πία τῷ σω-
τήρι ἡμῶν
Θεῷ.

John iii. 16.

Rom. v. 8.

Ephes. ii. 4.

us. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son. God hereby commends his love unto us, that we as yet being sinners, Christ died for us. It was not a particular fondness of affection, (such whereof no particular ground can be assigned or imagined,) but an universal (infinitely rich and abundant) goodness, mercy, and pity toward this eminent part of his creation, sunk into distress and lamentable wretchedness, which induced God to send his Son for the redemption of mankind.

2. God declares himself impartial (most particularly) in this case; that as all men in regard to him stand alike related, and are in the same condition, so he proceeds with indifferent affection, and upon the same terms with all. He is equally the Lord and Maker of all men; and all men are equally involved in guilt, and exposed to ruin; upon which grounds St. Paul inferreth, that as to God's regard of man's salvation, there is no difference between Jews and Greeks; and by parity of reason there can be none between any other sorts of persons, antecedently to

Rom. ii. 11. *God's merciful intentions. There is, saith he, no respect of persons with God,* (as to preparing the capacities and means, to propounding the terms and conditions of salvation, for about these he discourses;) for, *Is he,* saith the Apostle, *assigning the reason of that assertion, the*

Rom. iii.
29.

Rom. x. 12. *God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles? No: There is no difference;* saith he, *of Jew and Greek, for there is the same Lord of all, being rich* (rich in mercy and bounty) *unto all that call upon him;* that is by consequence simply unto all; for St. Paul implies, that God therefore provided that all men should have the means of calling upon him imparted to them; for that, *how should they call upon him without faith? and how should they believe without preachers? and how should there be preachers, if they were not sent?* Whence he infers (against the sense of those Jews, with whom he disputes) that it was necessary that the Apostles should have a commission to preach unto all. And, *The righteousness of*

Rom. iii.
23, 23.

God by the faith of Christ is manifested unto all, and over **SERM.**
all that believe; for there is no difference; for all have **LXXI.**
sinned, and come short of the glory of God: the relation of
God is the same to all men, (He is the God and Lord of
all;) the state and need of all men are the same; there is
therefore no difference, excepting that consequent one,
which compliance or non-compliance with the conditions
offered unto all doth induce. It is true in this respect,
what the Wise Man saith, ὁ πάντων δεσπότης ὁμοίως προνοεῖ **Wild. vi. 7.**
περὶ πάντων *He, that is Lord of all, careth (or provideth)*
for all alike; and what Clemens Alexandrinus says, as to
this particular, *All things lie equally for all from God; so*
that no man can complain of him^d; as partial to some, and
deficient to others.

3. We may observe, that the undertakings and per-
formances of *our Lord* are for nature and extent compared
with those of Adam, (who was τύπος τῷ μέλλοντος, *a type* **Rom. v. 14.**
of him that was to come;) as Adam, being a representa-
tive of mankind, did by his transgression involve all men
in guilt, and subject them to condemnation; provoked
God's wrath, and drew the effects thereof upon us;
brought all men under the slavery of sin, and necessity of
death; so was *our Lord* the *proxy* of mankind, and by
his performances in our behalf did undo for our advan-
tage, what the former did to our prejudice; by his en-
tire obedience expiating the common guilt, suspending
the fatal sentence, pacifying God's wrath, reducing right-
eousness, and restoring life to all that would embrace
them; so doth St. Paul at large (in the 5th chapter of
his Epistle to the Romans) propound and prosecute the
comparison; closing his discourse thus: *Therefore as by* **Rom. v. 18.**
the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to con-
demnation; so by the righteousness of one, the free gift
came upon all men to justification of life. As guilt, wrath,
and death forementioned, were the fruits of what Adam
did, falling upon all; so pardon, grace, and life, were (in

^d Πᾶσι πάντα ἰσα κῆται παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἰσὶν αὐτὸς ἀμφοῖς. *Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. p. 301.*

SERM. design) the effects of what our Saviour performed relating
LXXI. unto all. Yea, the same comparison St. Paul seems to in-

2 Cor. v. 14. *saith, that if one died for all, then are all men dead; that is, Christ's dying for all men, implies all men in a state of condemnation and subjection to death; and that inference supposes the performances of the first and second Adam to be in their nature and primary effects coextended and commensurate. The same St. Paul seemeth in express terms to say, All men have sinned, and are fallen short (or are destitute) of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace (or favour) by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (All men are justified, that is, according to God's favourable intention and design.) Yea, the very reason, why God permitted sin and death to prevail so universally is intimated to be his design of extending a capacity of righteousness and life unto all; so St. Paul tells us: God hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. And particularly, that by virtue of Christ's performances, death is abolished, and immortality is conferred upon all men, St. Paul most expressly teacheth us; For, saith he, as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

I observe that Prosper (an eager disputant about points allied to this) several times confesseth, that Christ may be most rightly affirmed to have been crucified for the redemption of the whole world, especially upon two accounts, for his true susception of human nature, and for the common perdition of all men in the first man^c; we have touched the latter; let us add, that

4. Our Saviour assuming our nature, and partaking of our flesh, *being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man; yea, endued with the passions and infirmities of man's nature, exposed to the tribulations and inconveniences of man's life, did thereby ally himself, and put on a fraternal relation unto all men. Forasmuch,* saith

^c Cum itaque rectissime dicatur Salvator pro totius mundi redemptione crucifixus, propter veram naturæ humanæ susceptionem, et propter communem in primo homine omnium perditionem, &c. *Prosper. ad Gal. c. 9.*

the Apostle to the Hebrews, *as children* (the children he means of the same father, or brethren; as the tenor of his discourse makes evident) are *partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same*; that is, graciously designing to become a brother to the children of men, he assumed all that was proper to man's nature. God, saith St. Paul, made *πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, the whole nation or race of men, dwelling upon the face of the earth, of one blood*; and of that one blood our Saviour was pleased to take part, entitling us thereby to a consanguinity with him¹; and it was a title of his, which he seemed to affect and delight in, *the Son of man*. He being such did sanctify our nature, by the closest conjunction thereof to the divine nature, and rendering it more than a temple of the Divinity; he dignified it, and (as that Apostle intimateth) advanced it above the angelical nature by an alliance to God himself; he thereby not only became qualified to mediate between God and man, and capable to transact that great business of man's salvation; but was engaged, and in a manner obliged to do it; for as he was *a man*, he surely was endued with the best of human affections, universal charity and compassion, which would excite him to promote the welfare of all; as he was *a man*, he was subject to the common law of humanity, which obliges to endeavour the common benefit of men. As he was *a brother* in relation, so he could not, he would not be otherwise in affection; he is not to be conceived deficient in performance of the offices suitable to that condition. That good-will which he requires us to bear toward all men indifferently, good and bad, friends and enemies, he questionless did bear himself in the highest degree, and to the utmost extent; the general beneficence, which in his conversation and practice he did express, doth signify how large his desires and intentions were in regard to the welfare of men; so that we may thence well aver with St. Ambrose: *Incarnationis*

SERM. LXXI.

Acts xvii. 26.

Heb. ii. 11.

Heb. ii. 7, 16.

1 Tim. ii. 5.

Matt. v. 44.
Gal. vi. 10.
Acts x. 38.

Ambr. de Parad. 8.

¹ Ἡ ἐκτέλεσις τῆς σεμνῆς ἐκ ἰδέας τὸν λόγον φέουσι Κύριον ὄντα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἰλιουθίζουσι ἢ ἡ γνωμὴ παρὰ τῷ λόγῳ πάσης ἀνθρωπότητος, &c. *Athan. c. Arr. Orat. iii. p. 385.*

SERM. *Dei mysterium est universæ salus creaturæ; The mystery of*
LXXI. *God's incarnation doth respect the salvation of all mankind,*
 according to his desire and design.

Rev. xv. ii. 5. We are taught that *our Lord* hath by his *saving per-*
 14. formances acquired a rightful propriety in, and a title of
 Acts x. 36. dominion over all men living; to him is committed the
 1 Cor. xi. 3. governance and protection of all mankind, as the reward
 Mat. xxviii. of what he did and suffered for its sake. *He is called the*
 18. xi. 27. *Lord of all men; and the head of every man.* It is said
 John iii. 35. that *all things by his Father are given into his hand, and*
 xiii. 3. *put under his feet; that power is given him over all flesh;*
 Heb. ii. 8. *that all authority is given him in heaven and earth; all*
 i. 2. *judgment is committed to him.* Which privileges, rights,
 John xvii. dignities, are declared to have been procured by the virtue
 2. v. 22. of his saving performances, and purchased by the price of
 Phil. ii. 9. his blood. *For, to this end, saith St. Paul, Christ both died*
 Psal. cx. 7. *and rose again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both*
 of the dead and living, (or might exercise lordship over
 both the dead and living, *ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυρι-*
 1 Cor. vi. 20. *εύσῃ*;) and, *We are not our own, (saith he again,) we are*
 Heb. ii. 9. *bought with a price: and, We see Jesus, for the suffering of*
death, crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of
God he might taste death for every man, (or, for the suffer-
ing of death, that by God's grace he might taste death
for every man, crowned with glory and honour; for there
 Phil. ii. 8, 9, *seems to be such a trajection in the words:)* and, *He was*
 Rev. v. 9, *obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross; therefore*
 12. *hath God exalted him, and given him a name above every*
name. Subjection then and redemption, as they have one
 ground, so they are implied to have the same extent; as
 every one must call Christ *Lord*, so he may call him *Sa-*
viour; therefore his *Lord*, because his *Saviour*. And since
 Christ hath got an authority over all men, a propriety in
 every man; since he hath undertaken to govern and pro-
 tect the world, he questionless, as a prince of incompara-
 ble benignity and clemency, doth seriously intend and de-

ὃ Ἀνθρώπου αὐτὸν πωλεῖς ὁ πατὴρ ἐκ ἀπλῆς ἐκείνου ἀνθρώπου, ἀλλ' οἷς τὸ πω-
 ρεύσας πάντων αὐτὸν, καὶ ἀγιάζων πάντας διὰ τοῦ χρίσματος πιστοῖσιν. *Ath. Orat.*
8. in Arr. 385.

fire the best welfare of all his people; it surely cannot be a small benefit to the community of men, that they are his subjects; the objects of his princely care, and of his mercy.—Κηδεταὶ τῶν συμπάντων, ὅπερ καὶ καθήκει καὶ κυρία Clem. πάντων γινομένων· σωτὴρ γάρ ἐστιν, ἐχὼ τῶν μὲν, τῶν δ' ἐ. He Strom. vii. p. 503.
taketh care of all, which doth become him that is Lord of all; for that he is indifferently the Saviour of all, saith Clem. Alexand.

6. We are commanded to *pray, intercede, and give thanks* (indifferently) *for all men*, even for heathens and persecutors; as for the objects of God's benevolent affection; whom *he would have to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of his truth*; expressing our charity in conformity to the unconfined goodness of God. Very good reason (argues St. Chrysostom) there is why we should pray for all men; for if God doth will the salvation of all men, we, in imitation of him, should will the same; and if we desire it, we should pray for it ^h. Upon which score the Catholic Church hath constantly and carefully observed this precept; so the learned writer *de Vocatione Gentium*: assures us: ⁱ *Which law of supplication, saith he, the devotion of all priests and of all the faithful people doth so observe, that there is no part of the world, in which such prayers are not solemnized by the Christian people. The Church of God doth therefore supplicate, not only for the Saints, and the regenerate in Christ, but also for all infidels, and enemies of the cross of Christ; for all idolaters, all persecutors, all Jews, heretics, and schismatics. And Prosper himself: ^k Setting aside, saith he, that distinction,*

ἢ Μιμῶ τῷ Θεῷ—ὡς πάντας θύλει σωθῆναι, ἐκόντως ὑπὲρ πάντων δι' εὐχόμεθα· οὐ πάντας αὐτὸς ἐπιλήσεται σωθῆναι, θύλει καὶ σὺ· οὐδ' ἐὰν θύλῃς, εὐχου. Chrysost.

ⁱ Quam legem supplicationis ita omnium sacerdotum, et omnium fidelium devotio, concorditer tenet, ut nulla pars mundi sit, in qua hujusmodi orationes non celebrentur a populis Christianis. Supplicat ergo ubique Ecclesia Dei non solum pro Sanctis et in Christo jam regeneratis, sed etiam pro omnibus infidelibus, et inimicis crucis Christi, &c.

^k Remota ergo discretionē, quam divina scientia intra secretum justitiæ suæ continet, sincerissime credendum atque profitendum est Deum velle, ut omnes homines salvi fiant; siquidem Apostolus, cujus ista sententia est, sollicitissime præcipit quod in omnibus Ecclesiis piissime custoditur, ut Deo pro omnibus hominibus supplicetur. Prof. ad Obj. Vincent. 2.

SERM. LXXI. *which the divine knowledge contains within the secret of his justice, it is most sincerely to be believed and professed, that God wills that all men shall be saved; since the Apostle, whose sentence that is, doth most solicitously enjoin, that which is in all the Churches most piously observed, that God should be implored for all men. So doth he attest the common practice, and declare the ground thereof.*

7. For which practice, and for the confirmation of its ground, (God's serious willingness and desire that men should be saved,) we have the pattern of our Lord himself praying to his Father for the pardon of the worst of men, his murderers; which as it demonstrated his charity toward them, so it argues that he was their Saviour, for that otherwise he knew they could not be in any capacity of having pardon. His praying for them implies the possibility of their receiving forgiveness; and such a possibility doth presuppose a disposition in God to grant it, and consequently a satisfaction provided, such as God requires and accepts, and which shall avail to their benefit, if toward the application thereof they perform their parts.

8. Indeed it is not easy to conceive, how we can heartily pray for pardon, or for any other blessing, either for ourselves or for others, without supposing Christ to be our Saviour and theirs; without supposing God placable and well affected towards us and them in Christ, upon the account of his performances and sufferings in our and their behalf. We are to offer up all our devotions in the name of Christ, and for his sake must implore all mercies and blessings from God; which how can we do seriously and with faith, if we may reasonably question whether Christ's merits do respect us, and consequently whether they can be available in our behalf? *I will, saith St. Paul, that men should pray in every place, lifting up pure hands, without wrath or doubting:* which precept how can any man observe; how can any man pray with calmness and confidence of mind, who is not assured that Christ is his Saviour, or that God for Christ's sake is disposed to grant his requests? But this point we may be obliged to prosecute somewhat farther in the application.

9. Either our Saviour's performances do respect all men, or some men (the far greatest part of men) do stand upon no other terms, than those of the first creation, or rather of the subsequent lapse and condemnation; being subject to an extremely rigorous law, and an infallibly certain guilt, and consequently to inevitable punishment; being utterly secluded from all capacity of mercy, and having no place of repentance left unto them, (the place of repentance being a most signal part of Christ's purchase;) so that if any such man should, according to the proportion of his light and ability, perform what is agreeable to God's law, doing what is possible to him (this may be supposed, for what is possible to a man he may do, what is possible is possible) in order to his salvation, he notwithstanding should be incapable of any mercy, favour, or acceptance. But, beside that it is expressly said, that *God did shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all*; and that we are plainly enough informed, that our Lord did reverse the first fatal sentence, and hath, as the mediator between God and man, evacuated all former covenants by establishing a new one, (for if any former covenant had been good, there had been no place sought for a new one, as the Apostle to the Hebrews discourseth)—besides these considerations, I say, and beside that such suppositions do not well suit to the nature of God, and do not well consist with the tenor of his providence; God positively and vehemently disclaimeth this rigour of proceeding; he both under Law and Gospel declares himself ready to admit any man's repentance; yea, earnestly invites all men thereto; yea, grievously explains and expostulates with men for not repenting; yea, not only says it, but swears it by his own life, that he desires any wicked man should do it; he strongly asserts, he earnestly inculcates, he loudly proclaims to all his readiness to pardon, and his delight in shewing mercy; the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering. He declares, that he will exact an account of men, according to proportion, answerable to their willingness to do what they could; and to the improvements of those

SERM.
LXXI.

Acts v. 31.
Luke xxiv.
47.

Rom. xi.
32.

Heb. viii. 7.

Acts xvii.
30.

Ezek. xviii.

Ezek.
xxxiii. 11.
Isa. lv. 3, 7.
Mic. vii. 8.
Rom. ii. 4.

2 Cor. viii.
12.
Matt. xxv.
25.

- SERM.** talents (those measures of light and strength) which they
LXXI. had, or might have had; that whoever is ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστός,
 Luke xix. faithful in using the smallest power, shall be accepted and
 17. xvi. 10. rewarded. He represents himself impartial in his judg-
 Acts x. 34. ment and acceptance of men's persons and performances;
 1 Pet. i. 17. any man, in any nation, his sincere, though imperfect,
 piety and righteousness being acceptable to him: the final
 ruin of men is not imputed to any antecedent defect lying
 in man's state, or God's will, to no obstacle on God's
 part, nor incapacity on the part of man, but wholly to
 man's blameable neglect, or wilful abuse of the means
 conducive to his salvation: no want of mercy in God, or
 virtue in the passion of our Lord, are to be mentioned or
 thought of; infidelity (formal or interpretative) and obsti-
 nate impenitency, disappointing God's merciful intentions,
 and frustrating our Lord's saving performances and en-
 deavours, are the sole banes of mankind; *Here, saith our*
Lord, is the condemnation, that light is come into the world,
and men loved darkness rather than light, because their
 John iii. 19. *deeds are evil. And, I speak these things, that ye might*
 John v. 34, 40. *be saved; but ye will not come to me, that ye might have*
 Matt. xxiii. 37. *life. And, How often have I willed to gather thy children,*
as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but ye
would not! Of the Pharisees and Lawyers our Saviour
 Luke vii. 30. said, that *they defeated the counsel of God toward them-*
selves, (ἠθέτησαν τὴν βουλὴν Θεοῦ εἰς ἑαυτοὺς,) the counsel of
 God, who designed to bring them to repentance by the
 instruction and exhortation of St. John the Baptist. Our
 Saviour invited many to the participation of the Gospel,
 Isa. xxv. 6. *(that great feast of fat things to all people, as the Prophet*
Isaiah calleth it;) but they would not come, saith the
 text: he iterated his message, but they carelessly neglect-
 Matt. xxii. 3, 5. *ing it (ἀμαλίσσαντες) went away, one to his farm, another to*
 Matt. xiii. 37, 38. *his merchandise, and the rest took his servants, and intreated*
them spitefully, and slew them. The sower (our Lord)
did sow in the field (the world) the good seed of heavenly
truth; but some would not admit it into their heads or
hearts; from others temptation bare it away; in others
worldly cares and desires choked it; our Lord spake the

most convincing words, such as no man ever spake, such **SERM.**
as drew *publicans* and *harlots* into the kingdom of hea- **LXXI.**
ven; he performed most astonishing works, such as never
the like were done, which were sufficient to convert Tyre John vii. 46. xv. 22. 24. ix. 32.
and Sidon, yea to have preserved Sodom, but without ef- Matt. xxi. 31.
fect; such were the invincible obstinacy, the gross stupa- John vii. 51. v. 44. xii. 43.
dity, the corrupt prejudices, and perverse affections of his Luke xvi. 14.
auditors and spectators, upon which causes our Lord
chargeth the inefficacy and unsuccessfulness of his endea- Matt. xiii. 18. xxiii. 14.
vours for their salvation. So doth St. Stephen call the
Jews, unto whom the Gospel was offered, *hard-necked, un-* Acts vii. 51. xxviii. 26.
circumcised in heart and ears; such as *did always resist the*
Holy Spirit. St. Paul gives the same character of them,
and assigns the same cause of their rejecting the Gospel.
And of the Jews of Antioch it is said, that they did
thrust away the word of salvation, judging themselves un- Acts xiii. 46.
worthy of everlasting life, (that is, disdaining to embrace
the overture of everlasting life made unto them.) And,
Despise thou the riches of God's goodness, and forbear- Rom. ii. 4.
ance, and long-suffering; being ignorant that the good-
ness of God leadeth thee to repentance? So St. Paul expof-
tulates with the incredulous Jew. And, *How, saith the* Heb. ii. 3.
Apostle to the Hebrews, *shall we escape, if we neglect so*
great salvation? So do our Lord and his Apostles state
the reason of men's miscarrying in this great affair; signi-
fying all requisite care and provision to be made on God's
part for their salvation; and imputing the obstruction
solely to their voluntary default of compliance with God
in his conduct and management thereof.

Neither are the dealings and declarations of God to-
ward those who lived under the Law and Prophets, im-
pertinent to this purpose; they are applicable upon con-
sideration of parity in reason, or likeness in case.

What remonstrances concerning the gentleness, kind-
ness, and equity of his dealings, what exprobrations of
their stubbornness and stupidity God did anciently make
to Israel under that particular dispensation, (which yet in
tendency and in representation may be deemed general,)
the same he might now use toward all mankind, under

SERM. LXXI. this universal economy, wherein God hath given to his Son, the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession; whereby all the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of the Lord, and his Christ; which hath erected an unconfined kingdom of grace; to which all men in design and of right are subject; in respect to which every nation is in obligation and duty become the people of God. *What, said God to them, could I have done more to my vineyard than I have done? Wherefore, when I looked for grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes? O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help. I have spread out my hands all the day long to a rebellious and gainsaying people. I spake unto you rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; I called, but ye answered not; I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. When I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. And, Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken; behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it. They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear; yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit. Which passages, with many others of the like importance that occur, do imply the large extent of God's merciful intentions, and the competency of the means, which God affords for the salvation of men; that he wants no affection or inclination to save them; that he neglects no means proper for effecting it; that he draws them into the way leading thither by serious and earnest invitation, directs them by needful light and instruction, excites them by powerful arguments and persuasions; and as St. Ambrose speaketh, *Quod in Deo fuit, ostendit omnibus, quod omnes voluit liberare: God shewed to all, that what was in him, he did will to deliver (or save) all men. Whence he may truly and properly be called the**

Benefactor and Saviour, even of those, who by their wilful malice or neglect do not obtain salvation^h. For in respect to the same favours, which are exhibited and tendered to them, he is the Saviour of those, who by hearkening to God's call, and complying with God's design; by well using the means vouchsafed, and performing the conditions required, do finally attain salvation.

SERM.
LXXI.

If it be said, that these transactions do refer only to God's own people, or to those only, unto whom God pleased to dispense especial revelations of truth and overtures of mercy; that we therefore cannot thence infer any thing concerning the general extent of God's design, or the virtue of Christ's performances in respect to all mankind; we may to this suggestion rejoin, that by observing the manner of God's proceedings toward them, unto whom he openly declareth his mind and will, we may reasonably collect how he standeth affected toward others, and by what rules, or upon what accounts, he dealeth with them; taking in the analogy of reason, and parity or disparity of the case. As to God's affection, it is the same every where, agreeable to that nature, which inclineth him to be *good to all, and merciful over all his creatures*, as the Psalmist tells us; unto which disposition⁹ his providence yields attestation; for *ἐκ ἀμαρτυρίων ἀφῆκεν αὐτὸν, ἀγαθωποιῶν*, he did not leave himself without testimony, doing good to all, as St. Paul tells us; although he doth not dispense his favours in the same method, or discover his meaning by the same light, or call all men to him with the same voice and language.

Neither was mankind ever left destitute of that *divine grace*, which, as the good writer *de Vocatione Gentium* saith, *never denied itself to any ages, with the same virtue, in different measure, with an unchangeable counsel, and multiform operation*ⁱ. So in one place; and in another,

^h ἀπολογούμενος μετὰ ἀποδείξεως ὅτι πάντα τὰ δις αὐτὸν ἡσυχῇ καὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ποιεῖται.— *Baf. in Ps. vii.*

ⁱ Gratia Dei nullis seculis se negavit, virtute una, quantitate diversa, concilio incommutabili, opere multiformi. ii. 5.

SERM. LXXI. ^k *There was always, saith he, dispensed to all men a certain measure of instruction from above, which, although it came from a more occult and sparing grace, did yet suffice to some for remedy, to all for testimony.*

Comparing the different states of men, we may substitute with St. Paul^l, for the *law of revelation* engraved upon *tables*, the *law of nature* written in men's hearts; for *prophetical instructions*, the *dictates of reason*; for *audible admonitions and reproofs*, *secret whispers of grace*, and checks of conscience; for *extraordinary instances of*
 Acts xiv. 17. *divine power, the ordinary works of the creation, (by which God's eternal divinity and power are discernible;)* for the *special and occasional influences of providence*, the *common and continual expressions of divine beneficence*; then allowing for the disparity (as to measure of evidence and efficacy) in these things; and as to the rest, the case is the same. If one part hath means more clear and forcible, yet those which are granted to the other are not
 Acts xvii. 27. void of use or virtue; by them all men in all places *may*
 Rom. i. 18, 20. *seek God, if haply they may feel him and find him*; yea
 ii. 15, 26. may, as St. Paul implieth, be able to know God, and in-
 i. 21. duced to serve him; to thank him, and to glorify him in some measure; in a measure answerable to such light and strength; no more doth God require, for no more will he reckon with them. If their helps be deemed more low and scanty, their duty in proportion is less high, and their account will be more easy. Enough certainly they have to excuse God from misprision of not having provided
 Rom. i. 20. competently for them, to render them, if they do not well use and improve it, inexcusable; and what they have is an effect of God's mercy procured and purchased by their Saviour. But of this point we may have occasion after-

^k Adhibita est semper universis hominibus quædam supernæ mensura doctrinæ, quæ etsi occultioris parciorisque gratiæ fuit, suffecit tamen quibusdam ad remedium, omnibus ad testimonium. ii. 15.

^l Rom. ii. 14, 15.

—Nulli nationi hominum bonitatis suæ dona subtraxit, ut propheticas voces et præcepta legalia convincerentur in elementorum obsequiis, et testimoniis accepisse. *De Voc. G.* i. 5. Rom. i. 19.

ward to say more; I shall now only add, that this suggestion, well considered, may afford another argument to confirm our doctrine; which is this. SERM.
LXXI.

10. If *our Lord* be the *Saviour* of all those to whom God's truth is declared, and his mercy offered; or, if he be the *Saviour* of all the members of the visible Church; particularly if he be the *Saviour* of those, who among these, rejecting the overtures and means of grace, or by disobedience abusing them, shall in the event fail of being saved, then is he the *Saviour* of all men. But *our Lord* is the *Saviour* of those persons; and therefore he is *the Saviour of all men*. The *assumption* we assayed to shew in the last argument; and many express testimonies of Scripture before mentioned establish it; the common style of Scripture doth imply it, when in the apostolical writings to all the visibly faithful indifferently the relation to Christ as their Saviour is assigned, an interest in all his saving performances is supposed, the title of *σωζόμενοι* and *σεσωσμένοι* (with others equivalent, of *justified, sanctified, regenerated, quickened, &c.*) are attributed. And in our text God is said to be *the Saviour* chiefly *τῶν πιστῶν*, of the *faithful*; which word in its common acception denotes all visible members of the Christian communion. And for its confirmation we adjoin; the Apostles at first, and the Church ever since after them (except some heterodox people of late) have professed readily to confer holy baptism, and therein to dispense remission of sins, together with other evangelical graces and privileges, to every man professing his faith in Christ, and resolution to observe Christ's law, upon this supposition, that Christ is the *Saviour* of all such persons, and by his salutary passion hath purchased that remission for them; although the dispensers of these graces could not discern what decrees God in his secret providence had passed upon them, or what the event should be as to their final state; yea although according to the judgment of prudence they could not but conceive, that all such should not be saved, but that many of them should be of those, who (as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh) would *draw back unto perdition*, Heb. x. 39.
2 Pet. i. 9.

SERM. who (as St. Peter implies some might and would do)
 LXXI. would forget the purgation, which they had received of
 their sins. That in thus doing the Church proceeds upon
 a persuasion that Christ is truly the Saviour of all its visi-
 ble members, duly admitted and incorporated therein; the
 thing itself plainly signifies; the tenor of its practice
 makes palpable; the forms of speech used in its holy ad-
 ministrations (of prayers, of sacraments, of exhortations)
 do suppose or express. For how can each member singly
 be asserted in holy baptism to be washed from his sins, and
 sanctified to God, and made regenerate or adopted into
 the number of God's children, and made partaker of
 Christ's death? How can thanksgiving in the common
 name, in most general terms, be offered up for Christ's
 saving performances? or the holy bread and cup be im-
 parted to each communicant as symbols and pledges of
 Christ's charity and mercy toward him? How can every
 Christian be instigated to obedience in gratitude to Christ;
 and those who transgress Christ's laws, upbraided for their
 ingratitude toward him; their rejecting, or renouncing,
 despising, or abusing him and his salvation? How can
 such things be said and done with any truth or con-
 sistency; yea without forgery and mockery, if every bap-
 tized Christian hath not an interest in our Lord's per-
 formances; if Christ be the Saviour only of an uncertain
 and unknown part in the Church? This consideration of
 the Church's practice hath made even the most vehement
 assertors of St. Austin's doctrine, (strained to the highest
 pitch,) in the more ancient and modest times, fully to
 acknowledge this position; that Christ is the Redeemer of
 every member of the visible Church, as appears by this

Anno 855. remarkable decree of the Council of Valentia in France,
 (consisting of the bishops of three provinces, favourers of
 Godscalcus's opinions.) *"We also do believe it most firmly
 to be held, that all the multitude of the faithful, being re-
 generated by water and the Holy Spirit, and hereby truly
 incorporated into the Church, and according to the aposto-*

^m Item firmissime tenendum credimus, &c. supra.

lical doctrine, baptized into the death of Christ, is by his blood washed from their sins. Because there could be no true regeneration, unless there were made, also a true redemption; since in the sacraments of the Church there is nothing empty, (or vain,) nothing ludificatory; but all thoroughly true, and supported by its own very truth and sincerity. Yet that out of the very company of believers and the redeemed, some are eternally saved, because by God's grace they faithfully abide in their redemption, bearing the Lord's speech in their hearts, *He that perseveres to the end shall be saved;* and that others, because they would not abide in the salvation of the faith, which they at first received, and did rather choose to frustrate the grace of redemption by evil doctrine or life, than to keep it, do nowise arrive to the plenitude of salvation, and to the perception of eternal beatitude. It is then a catholic and true doctrine, that at least Christ is a Saviour of all appearing Christians; and supposing the truth thereof, I say that by consequence he is also the Saviour of all men. For it appeareth thence, that the design of our Saviour's performances did not flow from, or was not grounded upon any special love, or any absolute decree concerning those persons who in event shall be saved; since according to that supposition it extendeth to many others; wherefore it proceeded from God's natural goodness, and common kind affection toward mankind; from the compassion of a gracious Creator toward his miserable creature, whence all men are concerned and interested therein. Why God's merciful intentions were not explicitly declared and propounded to Socrates and Epictetus, as they were to Judas Iscariot and Simon Magus, is another question, which we may afterward in some manner affoil; at present, it suffices to say, that the overture of mercy made to such wretches doth argue God's kind disposition and good intention toward all men; so it did in St. Ambrose's opinion; who says, that our Lord ought not to pass by the man who should betray him, that all men might take notice, that in

SERM. the choice even of his traitor, he did hold forth a pledge
 LXXI. or mark of all men's being to be saved^a.

But the truth of this doctrine will farther appear by the declaration and surveyal of those respects according to which Christ is represented the Saviour of men, as also by considering how useful and conducive to piety this doctrine is, as ministering grounds and obligations, encouragements and motives to the practice of most considerable duties required from all men. But these things must be reserved to another occasion.

^a Et ideo nec proditorium debuit præterire, ut adverterent omnes, quod in electione etiam proditoris sui servandorum omnium insigne prætendit. *Ambr. de Parad. 8.*

S E R M O N LXXII.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

I TIM. iv. 10.

—*The living God ; who is the Saviour of all men,
especially of those that believe.*

THAT our Lord Jesus is the Saviour of all men, we SERM.
LXXII.
have before from plain testimonies of holy Scripture, and
from some arguments grounded there, assayed to shew.
The same will be made farther apparent by considering
the respects according to which he is such ; and those we
may first consider generally and in the gross, then survey
them more particularly and distinctly.

In general we may say, that our Lord is the Saviour of
all men, for that he hath rendered all men *salvabiles*, ca-
pable of salvation ; and *salvandos*, designed to salvation.
For that he hath removed all obstacles peremptorily de-
barring men from access to salvation, and hath procured
competent furtherances to their attainment of it. For
that he hath rescued mankind out of that dead and de-
sperate condition, wherein it lay involved ; being *the bread* John vi. 33.
*of God, who hath descended from heaven, that he might
give life to the world, as he saith of himself.* For that he
hath performed whatever on his part is necessary or fit in
order to salvation, antecedently to the acceptance and
compliance with those reasonable conditions, which by
God's wisdom are required toward the instating men into

SERM. LXXII. a full and immediate right to salvation, or to a complete and actual fruition thereof. He made the way to happiness plain and passable; levelling the insuperable cliffs, and

Luke iii. 5. filling up the chasms, and rectifying the obliquities, and smoothing the asperities thereof, as the Prophet foretold; so that all men, who would, might conveniently walk

Luke iv. 18. therein. * He set the doors of paradise wide open, so that who pleased might enter in; all the bonds and restraints under which men lay, he so far loosed, that any man might be free, who would concur to his own liberty and enlargement. All the protection, aid, and encouragement which was needful toward obtaining salvation, he afforded and exhibited to every one, that would embrace and make use of them. In respect to which performances he might be justly esteemed and truly called a *Saviour*, although all men do not in effect become saved. For the estimation and denomination of performances are to be grounded upon their own nature and design, not upon events depending upon the contingent and arbitrary behaviour of men. As he that freely offers a rich boon is no less to be accounted a benefactor and liberal, although his gift be refused, than if it were accepted; as he that opens the prison is to be styled a deliverer, although the captive will not go forth; as he that ministers an effectual remedy, although the patient will not use it, deserves the honour and thanks due to a physician; so is *our Lord* in regard to what he hath performed for men, and offered to them, (being sufficient to prevent their misery, and promote their happiness,) to be worthily deemed, and thankfully acknowledged, their *Saviour*, although not all men, yea although not one man should receive the designed benefit. Accordingly we may observe,

Acts xvi. 17. that in the Scripture-style, those persons are said to be **Καταγγίλ- λειν ἑδόν σωτηρίας.**—**1 Cor. i. 18.** saved, who are only in a way toward salvation, although they do not arrive thither; and the means conducing to salvation are said to save, although their effect may be defeated; **ῥωζόμενοι** and **σωζόμενοι** are terms applied to all **Acts ii. 47.** Christians, and Christ is **Rev. xxi. 24.** **ὁ σώσας, he that hath saved them;** **Eph. ii. 5.** **2 Tim. i. 9.**

ὁ γὰρ ἐν τῇ καταστάσει ὑμῶν ἡμεῖς, ὁ παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων, &c. *Athan. in pass.*

U d a

and faith is said to have saved them, although some of them *εἰς τὴν μάραν*, have believed in vain, or to no effect, **LXXII.** forsaking and renouncing their faith; and baptism saves them who partake it, although being washed, they return to their wallowing in the mire. And as our Lord is so termed a Saviour in respect to them, who are, by faith and admission into the Church, put into a more near capacity of salvation, as St. Paul speaketh : *ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἡ σωτηρία, ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν*, (Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed;) so is he in respect of all those, who are in any capacity thereof, although a more remote one. 1 Cor. xv. 1 Tit. iii. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 21. 2 Pet. ii. 22.

But let us now view more nearly and distinctly the respects in which he is a Saviour of all men, or the particular benefits and advantages conducing to salvation, which by his performances accrue to mankind; for *πάντοτε τὴν σωτηρίαν ἀνάστη χάριζται τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι*, In very many ways he bestoweth salvation upon all mankind, as Clemens Alexandrinus speaks. Clem. Alex. Pædag. 11.

1. Our Lord is the Saviour of all men, as having effected that Almighty God (who upon great provocations was justly displeased and angry with man, who had averted his face, and withdrawn his favour from mankind, whom our apostasy and rebellion had rendered a stranger and an enemy to us) hath deposed his wrath toward mankind, hath conceived a kind affection to it, doth cast a favourable aspect upon it; being thoroughly reconciled and made a friend thereto by our Saviour's mediation. *This is my beloved Son, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, in whom I have been well pleased*, was the attestation given from God to our Lord; the meaning whereof in regard to men, the holy choir of angels did interpret, when after the glad some report of his birth, (that great joy, which should be to all people,) they sang, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good-will toward men*. Which St. Paul farther declareth, when he saith, that by him *εὐδόκησε*, God pleased to reconcile unto himself all things, upon earth, and in heaven; and when he saith, *That God was in Christ; reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins*. And, *When we* Matt. iii. 17. xii. 18. Luke ii. 10, 14. Col. i. 20. Eph. i. 10. 2 Cor. v. 19. Rom. v. 10.

SERM. *were enemies, faith he again, we were reconciled to God by*
 LXXII. *the death of his Son: When we were enemies, that implies*

God antecedently to any man's conversion to have been appeased, and become favourably disposed toward all men, or toward those whom St. Paul speaketh unto, as men; so the reason of the case doth import, and so the analogy which St. Paul immediately after propounds between the results of Adam's transgression and our Saviour's obedience (as to provocation and reconciliation, to condemnation and absolution, to the intents of bringing death and life upon all men) doth enforce. Whence it is, that God declareth himself now to bear an universal goodwill to mankind, that he doth earnestly desire the welfare of all men, and is displeased with the ruin of any man; that he *would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, because there is one Mediator between God and man; that he would not have any perish, but that all should come to repentance*; this he affirms, yea (for the confirmation of our faith and our consolation therein) he in the Evangelical Prophet swears it, *As I live, faith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* So far toward our salvation is done, God meets us half way; he is reconciled unto us, it remains only that we be reconciled to him; that we hearken to the embassy

1 Tim. ii.

4.

2 Pet. iii. 9.

Heb. vi. 16,

18.

Ezek.

xxxiii. 11.

2 Cor. v. 20. from him: *Be reconciled to God.*

2. Jesus is the Saviour of all men, by satisfying the divine justice, and repairing God's honour in their behalf. The disloyal and ingrateful behaviour of man had so wronged, so endamaged, so dishonoured God, (had so abused the goodness, disparaged the wisdom, slighted the power, impeached and slurred the authority of his Creator, had so prejudiced all the rights and interests of God,) that by the divine wisdom it was thought fit, that he should not be restored into a capacity of mercy and favour, without a signal compensation made, and an exemplary punishment undergone, whereby the right of God should conspicuously be asserted, his love of goodness and dislike

of wickedness should be remarkably demonstrated^b, and every creature in heaven and earth should be solemnly admonished of its duty; of the reverence and obedience it owes to the great Creator, of the heinous guilt and horrible mischief it incurs by offending him. Such a compensation man was nowise able to make, or fit to undergo such a punishment: our Saviour therefore, out of infinite pity and charity, did undertake both^c; by a voluntary condescension putting himself into the low and weak state of man; subjecting himself unto that law which man was obliged unto, and suffering the pains which man had deserved. This he was pleased to do in man's behalf, and in our stead; and God was pleased to accept it as so done. ^dHis incarnation (or exinanition of himself, as St. Paul calleth it) was an act of that high duty and goodness, that it in virtue surpassed all the obedience, which all creatures were able to render; that it yielded God more satisfaction and more honour than the joint endeavours of all the world could confer. His with so intense charity and cheerfulness fulfilling all righteousness did far more please God, than all our most exact obedience could have done; his enduring bitter pains and disgraces (considering the infinite dignity of his person, his near relation and dearness to God, his perfect innocence and rectitude, yea his immense charity, contentedness, and patience) more than countervailed the punishment due to the sins of all men. Such a payment was more than served to discharge all our debts, (it served to purchase an *overplus* of graces and blessings;) so rich a price was more than sufficient to ransom all the world from captivity; so goodly, so pure, so sweet, so precious a sacrifice might worthily expiate and atone all the guilts of men.

SERM.
LXXII.

Phil. ii. 7.

Vide Cyrill.
in Eph.
Conc. p.
183. Δι-
καιώση τὴν
ἡμετέραν φθ-
σιν, &c.

Eph. v. 2.
Heb. x. 10.
ix. 12.
1 Pet. i. 19.

^b Λατὼν δὲ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἔχουσιν κατὰ τὰ ἴδια πάθη μίμνησιν, ἁμαρτανῶν καὶ νεκροί. ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ λόγου δύναμιν ἀναστήντες ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἄφθαρτοι αἱ διαμείνουσιν. *Athan. in Arian. Orat. iv. 485.*

^c Τότε γὰρ καὶ θάνατος, καὶ πᾶσι ἐλύετο, καὶ δαίμονες πατησχύοντο καὶ ἰδιω-
ματίζοντο θριαμβούμενοι, καὶ τὸ χειρόγραφον τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τῇ σταυρῇ προσελύθη, &c. *Chrys. in Johan. i. 14.*

^d Ἡ ἰσχυρὴ παρουσία τοῦ σωτῆρος θανάτῳ λύτρων καὶ πείνῃσι πάσι σωτηρίαν γίγνεται. *Athan. ad Adelp. Ep.*

SERM. LXXII. Now if we inquire what our Saviour did redeem, the consideration of what he paid may, as St. Austin tells^e, help to inform us; *Quæritis quid emerit? Videte quid dederit, et invenite quid emerit.* Do ye seek, saith he, what he bought? See what he gave, and find what he bought. However, that as the value and sufficiency of our Lord's performances, so the design and effect thereof did reach so far in regard to man; that his charity was no less extensive than his performance was complete, for our good, the holy Scripture teaches us. For, *He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world*, saith the Baptist. And, *The bread, which I gave is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* And, *He is a propitiation*, saith St. John, *for our sins; and not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.* And, *He is the mediator of God and man, who gave himself* (ἀντίδοτον ὑπὲρ πάντων) *a ransom, in the stead, and for all men*, saith St. Paul. And, *He tasted death for every one*, saith the author to the Hebrews. And, *He was that one Man, who, as it was expedient, did die for the whole nation of men.* And, *God was in him, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their sins.* And, *He came into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might by him be saved*, (or freed from condemnation.) And, *As by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one, mercy came upon all to justification of life.* The end we see of our Saviour's performances was, that he might wipe off the guilt of sin from all mankind; that he might reverse the condemnation passed thereupon, and that he might remove the punishment due thereto; or, that, absolving the first man's sin, he might take it away from the whole race, as St. Athanasius speaks.

Rom. iii.
23, 24.

All men have sinned, and come short (or are destitute) of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, by the

* Μὴ θαυμάζετε εἰ νόστος ἅλς ἔλατρεθῆν· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἀνθρώποις ψιλός, ἀλλ' οἷος τοιοῦτος, ὁ ὑπερπαθήσας, &c. *Cyrril. Cat. 13.*

† Ἰνα καὶ οὗτος ᾖν ἁμαρτίαν, ἀπὸ παντὸς αὐτὸν ἀφ' τοῦ γένους. *Athan. in pass.*

redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Christ hath redeemed us **SERM.**
 from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. He **LXXII.**
 was born under the law, that he might redeem those which Gal. iii. 13.
 were under the law. He that knew no sin was made sin, iv. 5.
 (was punished and dealt with as a sinner,) that we might 2 Cor. v. 21.
 be made the righteousness of God in him, (that we might
 be capable of being esteemed and dealt with as righteous
 by God upon his account.) So that the result is, divine
 justice being fully satisfied, and the honour of God fully
 repaired, (in regard to all sins past and future,) the mouth
 of vengeance being stopped, the claims of death and hell
 being evacuated, that general sentence of condemnation
 (passed upon all the sons of Adam) is suspended, death
 ceases to reign by any just power, or inevitable necessity;
 (it is, as St. Paul saith, abolished or abrogated as to any 2 Tim. i.
 lawful right, or necessary force it hath;) the rigour and 10.
 severity of that law, which upon pain of death exacteth Gal. iii. 10,
 most punctual obedience, (and which consequently doth 12.
 expose all men to unavoidable condemnation,) is tem- Rom. x. 5.
 pered and abated, a foundation is laid for the shewing
 mercy, and granting pardon. In respect whereto,

3. Our Lord is the Saviour of all men, as having in the
 behalf of mankind transacted and ratified a new covenant,
 very necessary for, and very conducive to, the salvation of
 mankind; whereby salvation is made attainable, and is
 really tendered unto all, upon feasible and equal con-
 ditions. According to the purport whereof upon any
 man (however stained or loaded with the guilt of most
 heinous transgressions) his embracing the overtures there-
 of, consenting to, and complying with the terms pro-
 pounded therein, that is, sincerely believing; and seriously
 repenting; returning to God with hearty desires and
 earnest resolutions to serve him; God is ready to dispense
 mercy and pardon; and immediately receiveth the person
 into grace and favour with him; yea, the man continuing
 to perform a faithful, though imperfect, obedience, an
 obedience suitable to man's natural infirmity and frailty,
 and proportionable to the assistances afforded him; God
 farther promiseth to bestow inestimable blessings and re-

- SERM. LXXII.** wards of joy and happiness. That covenant which the prophets implied of old, when (beside and beyond what the Jewish law did import) they preached thus: *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil—though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool.* And, *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* And, *If the wicked man will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die,* (so God in Isaiah and Ezekiel declareth his intention to proceed with men, avowing that way of his to be most equal and fair.) This is that covenant which our Lord commanded his Apostles to declare and propound to all mankind; *Go ye, said he to them, into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature;* that Gospel according to which, as it is expressed in St. Luke, *repentance and remission of sins ought to be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;* in respect to which, St. Peter says, that *God hath exalted our Lord to be a Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance to Israel, and remission of sins;* (to grant repentance, that is, as the Apostle to the Hebrews and Clemens Romanus speak, μετανοίας τόπον, room for repentance, or capacity to receive pardon upon repentance; concerning which covenant that Clemens, (the fellow-labourer of St. Paul, and whom Clemens Alexandrinus calleth an Apostle,) in that excellent, admirable, and almost canonical Epistle to the Corinthians, which, as Eusebius and Jerome tell us, was anciently publicly read in most Churches, hath these remarkably full and clear expressions; *Let us, saith he, look steadfastly*
- Isa. i. 16.
Isa. i. 18.
Isa. lv. 7.
Ezek. xviii. 21.
Mark xvi. 15.
Luke xxiv. 47.
Acts v. 31.
Phil. iv. 8.
Θαυμασία. Euseb.
'Εν πλείυσις ἐκκλησίαις. Euseb.

Ἐ Ἀρνίσκομεν εἰς τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἴδομεν ὅς ἐστι τίμιον τῇ Θεῷ αἷμα αὐτοῦ, ἵτι διὰ τὴν ἡμιτέραν σωτηρίαν ἐκχυθὲν, παντὶ τῇ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ἐπέθηκεν. Ἀρνίσκομεν εἰς γυνὴς πόσας, καὶ καταμάρτυρομεν ἵτι ἐν γυνὴ καὶ γυνὴ μετανοίας τόπον ἴδομεν ὁ δισπότης τοῖς βυδαρίνοις καταρραφῆναι ἐκ αὐτοῦ. Clem. ad Corinth.

upon the blood of Christ, and let us see how precious to God **SERM.**
 his blood is, which being shed for our salvation, did bring **LXXII.**
 the grace of repentance to the whole world. Let us atten-
 tively regard all ages, and observe that in every generation
 the Lord granted place of repentance to them who would
 turn unto him. This is that new and better covenant, esta-
 blished upon better promises, (cancelling all former, ex-
 ceptionable, imperfect, and ineffectual compacts, referring
 to man's interest and duty,) about which the Apostle to
 the Hebrews discourseth, and whereof he calleth our Lord Heb. viii.
 the Mediator and Sponsor; in regard to which St. Paul 6. ix. 15.
 calleth him the Mediator between God and man; plainly xii. 24. vii.
 declaring all men to have a concernment and interest there- 22.
 in; for this supposition he useth as an argument proving 2 Cor. iii.
 God's universal desire of man's conversion and salvation: 6.
Who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the 1 Tim. ii.
knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one 4. 5.
Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus b.
 By virtue of which covenant it is, that any such degrees of
 love or fear toward God, such as men are capable of, are
 available, any righteous performances, such as our weak-
 ness can produce, are acceptable, any honest endeavours
 do receive countenance and encouragement; and that, as
 St. Peter observed, *in every nation he that feareth God, and* Acts x. 35.
worketh righteousness, is accepted by him; although his
 fear of God be not so intense, or pure; his righteousness
 not so exact and unblameable, as according to extremity
 of law and duty, they should be. From which covenant
 so far is any man, according to God's intention and de-
 sire, from being excluded, that all men are seriously in-
 vited, vehemently exhorted, earnestly entreated to enter
 into it, and to partake the benefits exhibited thereby.
 Every man who feeleth himself to want those benefits,
 and is desirous of mercy and ease from the guilt and bur-
 den of his sins, may come and welcome. *Ho, every one* Isa. lv. 1.

^b Quo dicto ostenditur nullum hominem secundum naturam esse pollu-
 tum, sed æqualiter omnes ad Christi Evangelium provocari. *Hier. ad Aug.*
Epist. 11.

SERM. that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; so the Evangelical LXXII. Prophet proclaims; and, *If any man thirsteth, let him*

John vii.
37.
Matt. xi.
28.

come to me and drink, crieth our Lord; and, Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Δεῦτε πάντες, Come all to me: all men therefore;

2 Cor. v.
20.

saith Origen, who from the nature of sin do labour and are burdened, are called to that rest; which is with the Word of God¹.) And, *In Christ's name*, saith St. Paul, *we are ambassadors, as though God by us entreateth: we pray you for Christ's sake, be ye reconciled to God; the purport of which embassy, together with its extent, he elsewhere*

Acts xvii.
30.

thus expresseth, ταῦν παραγγέλλει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πᾶσι πανταχῶς μετανοεῖν. *He now proclaimeth to all men every where that they should repent; he consequently holds forth to all the benefits annexed to repentance. But of this we spake formerly.*

4. Our Lord Jesus is the Saviour of all men, as having purchased and procured for them competent aids, whereby they are enabled to perform the conditions required of them in order to their salvation; to acquire a sufficient knowledge of their duty, to subdue their bad inclinations

Eph. ii. 1.
Colof. ii. 13.
Rom. vii.
14, 15.
Eph. v. 8.
2 Cor. iv. 6.
2 Pet. i. 19,
&c.

and lusts, to withstand temptations; or, briefly, whereby they are enabled sincerely to repent of their sins, and acceptably to perform their due obedience. The truth of

Ὁ ἰσὶ τὰ αἰ-
σχρὰ ἐλπίδες
αὐτοφθοῦν
κεθαρίας ἰε-
ρον.
Max. Tyr.
Diff. 22.

this point, taking in the consideration of man's natural state, may by good consequence be inferred from the

truth of the points foregoing. If men are naturally so dead in trespasses and sins, so enslaved and sold under sin; so very prone to evil, and averse to good; so dark and blind, that they cannot well discern what they should do; so corrupt and weak, that they cannot perform what they know and confess to be good, (as St. Paul affirmeth men to be,) and consequently are of themselves indisposed to perform the duties acceptable to God², and requisite

¹ Πάντες ὅν οἱ ἄνθρωποι διὰ τὴν τοῦ ἁμαρτίας φύσιν νοστιῶντες καὶ περισφαιρούμενοι καλοῦνται ἐπὶ τὴν παρὰ τοῦ λόγου τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀνάπαυσιν. Orig. in Cels. 3.

² Si Deus non operatur in nobis, nullius possumus esse participes virtutis; sine hoc quippe bono nihil est bonum, sine hac luce nihil est lucidum, sine hac sapientia nihil sanum, sine hac iustitia nihil rectum. De Voc. Gent. i. 8.

by his appointment toward their salvation, then either our Lord hath provided for them a communication of grace sufficient to countervail or surmount that natural impotency, or all his designs for their good are imperfect or inconsistent, (aiming at an end, without proving requisite means, or removing necessary obstructions,) and his performances, whereby the forementioned benefits were procured, do prove ineffectual and fruitless. For God being appeased, and become well-affected to man's salvation, divine justice being satisfied, the rigour of law being mitigated, repentance being made available, and an obedience, agreeable to man's frailty, becoming acceptable, with all other the immediate results of our Saviour's transactions for man, would signify nothing in regard to him, who still lieth under a necessity of sinning, or an inability of performing that which is indispensably exacted from him toward a complete enjoyment of those benefits and favours. In vain is the debt paid, and the bond cancelled, and the prison set open, and liberty proclaimed, and the prisoner called forth, if he be not himself able to knock off the fetters which detain him, and there is no help afforded, by which he may do it. But our Lord hath surely laid his designs more advisedly, and hath prosecuted his work more perfectly. Wherefore we may suppose that a competency of grace and spiritual assistance is by virtue of our Saviour's performances really imparted to every man, qualifying him to do what God requires, and is ready to accept from him in order to his welfare; that our Saviour hath sent abroad his Holy Spirit, (that fountain of all true goodness, of all spiritual light, strength, and comfort,) like the sun, to shine, to warm, to dispense benign influences over the world; although it shineth not so brightly and vigorously, and its presence is not so visible and sensible in one place as another; which Holy Spirit, as it is in its essence omnipresent, so it is likewise in its energy incessantly working (in reasonable measure, right manner, and fit season, as wisdom ordereth) upon the minds and affections of men, infusing good thoughts and motions, impressing arguments and motives to good prac

SERM.
LXXII.

Τὸς δὲ πᾶσι
ἐκτρέφεται.
καὶ ἰσχυρὸς
ἐστὶν ἐν
ἐκείνῳ
ὅπως ἐκείνῳ
ἐκτρέφεται.
Clem. Alex.
Strom. vii.
p. 393.

SERM. LXXII. tice, cherishing and promoting good purposes, checking bad designs, restraining and reclaiming from bad courses. Our reason, however aided by exterior instruction and excitement, being unable to deal with those mighty temptations, oppositions, and discouragements we are to encounter with, he hath given us a wise and powerful Spirit, to guide and advise us, to excite and encourage us, to relieve and succour us in all our religious practice and spiritual warfare. So that all deliverance from the prevalence of temptation and sin we owe to his grace and assistance. That to these purposes the Holy Spirit is plentifully conferred upon all the visible members of the Christian Church, we have plainly declared in Scripture; it was a promise concerning the evangelical times, that God would pour forth his Spirit upon all flesh; the collation thereof is a main part of the evangelical covenant, (into a participation of which every Christian is admitted,) it being the finger of God, whereby God's law is impressed upon their inward parts, and engraven in their hearts, (as the prophets describe the effects of this covenant.) And the end of our Saviour's passion is by St. Paul declared to be, *that the blessing of Abraham might come unto the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith*; that is, that becoming Christians we might partake thereof. And the apostolical ministry (that is, preaching the Gospel, and dispensing the privileges thereof) is therefore styled, *διακονία πνεύματος, the ministry of the Spirit*. And the *tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking the Holy Ghost*, is, according to the Apostle to the Hebrews, part of the character of a visible Christian, (such a Christian, who might *παραισείν, fall away*, as he supposeth, and *recrucify the Lord, and expose him to shame*;) and St. Peter makes reception of the Holy Ghost to be a concomitant or consequent of baptism; *Repent, saith he, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise* (or that promise of the Spirit, which is called *the Spirit of promise* peculiar to the Gospel) *is unto you, and to your*

Joel ii. 28.
Acts ii. 17.

Jer. xxxi.
38.
Ezek. xi.
19.
Heb. viii.
11.
2 Cor. iii.
3.

Gal. iii. 14.

2 Cor. iii.
8.
Heb. vi. 4,
5.

2 Theff. ii.
3.

Acts ii. 38,
39.

Eph. i. 13.

children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the **SERM.**
 Lord our God shall call: (that is, the Holy Spirit is pro- **LXXII.**
 mised to all, how far distant soever in time or place, who
 shall be invited unto, and shall embrace Christianity;) and
 accordingly, St. Paul saith of Christians, that God accord- Tit. iii. 5.
 ing to his mercy hath saved us, by the laver of regeneration,
 and renewing of the Holy Ghost. And, Know ye not, saith 1 Cor. iii.
 he to the Corinthians, that ye are the temple of God; and 16.
 that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (that is, Do ye not
 understand this to be a common property and privilege
 of Christians, such as ye profess yourselves to be?) And
 the union of all Christians into one body doth, according to 1 Cor. xii.
 St. Paul, result from this one Spirit, as a common soul 13.
 imparted to them all, inanimating and actuating the
 whole body, and every member thereof. For by one Spi-
 rit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gen-
 tiles, whether bond or free, and have been all made to drink
 of one Spirit. And it hath been the doctrine constantly
 with general consent delivered in and by the Catholic
 Church, that to all persons, by the holy mystery of bap-
 tism duly initiated into Christianity, and admitted into the
 communion of Christ's body, the grace of the Holy Spirit
 is communicated, enabling them to perform the con-
 ditions of piety and virtue which they undertake; and
 continually watching over them for accomplishment of
 those purposes; which Spirit they are admonished not to Eph. iv. 30.
 resist, to abuse, to grieve, to quench; but to use it well, 1 Cor. xii.
 and improve its grace to the working out their salvation. 7.
 Thus much concerning the result of our Saviour's per- Phil. ii. 13.
 formances, in this kind, in respect to the community of
 Christians, we learn from the holy Scripture and eccle-
 siastical tradition interpreting it; whence we may discern,
 that the communications of grace do not always flow
 from any special love or absolute decree concerning men,
 but do commonly proceed from the general kindness and
 mercy of God; by our Lord procured for mankind; and
 consequently we may thence collect, that somewhat of
 this nature is to the same purpose, from the same source,
 and upon the same account, also granted and dispensed

SERM. LXXII. to others. Unto Christians indeed this great benefit (for the reward, the encouragement, the support of their faith; and for promoting their obedience, who are in a nearer capacity and more immediate tendency to salvation) is in a more plentiful measure, and a more conspicuous manner dispensed; but that, besides that dispensation, there have been other (not so plainly signified, or expressly promised, yet really imparted) communications of grace, in virtue of our Saviour's merits, there are (beside the main reason alleged, inferring it from our Lord's being the Saviour of all men) divers good inducements to believe. For even those Christians, to whom upon their faith the Holy Spirit is promised and bestowed, are by previous operations of God's grace (opening their minds, inclining their heart, and tempering their affections) induced to embrace Christianity, faith itself being a gift of God, and a fruit of the Holy Spirit. And before our Saviour's coming all good men have thereby been instructed and enabled to do well. And before any special revelation made, or any particular covenant enacted, (before the inclosure of a particular people or church, the confinement of God's extraordinary presence and providence to one place,) divine grace appears diffused over several nations, being watchful in guiding and moving men to good, and withdrawing them from evil; neither is there reason why such an appropriation of special graces and blessings (upon special seasons) unto some should be conceived to limit or contract God's general favour, or to withdraw his ordinary graces from others. God surely (*who is πλεσιος εν ιδειν, rich in mercy*; yea, hath υπερβαλλουσα πλεον χαρις, *excessive riches of grace*) is not so poor or parsimonious, that being liberal to some should render him sparing toward others¹; his

Eph. ii. 4,
7.

¹ Ex quo perspicuum fit natura omnibus inesse Dei notitiam, nec quemquam sine Christo nasci, et non habere semina in se sapientiae, justitiae, reliquarumque virtutum. Unde multi absque fide, et Evangelio Christi vel sapienter faciunt aliqua vel sancte, &c. *Hier. in Galat. i.*

^m Secundum Scripturam credimus et piissime consistemus, quod nunquam universitati hominum divinae providentiae cura defuerit. Quem licet excipit sibi populum specialibus ad pietatem direxerit institutis, nulli tamen nationi hostium bonitatis suae dona subtrahit, &c. *De Vocat. Gen. i. p.*

grace is not like the sea, which if it overflow upon one **SERM.**
 shore, must therefore retire from another; if it grow deep **LXXII.**
 in one place, must become shallower in another. *Is the* **Mic. ii. 7.**
Spirit of the Lord straitened? it is a question in Micah;
 and, *Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?* **Isa. i. 2.**
 another question in Isaiah: No; *The Lord's hand is not* **lix. 1.**
shortened, that it cannot save; nor his ear heavy, that it
cannot hear; at any time, in any place; he is no less able,
 no less ready than he ever was, to afford help to his poor
 creatures, wherever it is needful or opportune. As there **Gen. xx. 3.**
 was of old an Abimelech among the Philistines, whom **xxvi. 8.**
 God by special warning deterred from commission of sin;
 a divine Melchisedeck among the Canaanites; a discreet
 and honest Jethro in Midian; a very religious and vir- **Exod. xviii.**
 tuous Job in Arabia; who by complying with God's
 grace, did evidence the communication thereof in several
 nations; so it is not unreasonable to suppose the like cause
 now, although we cannot by like attestation certify con-
 cerning the particular effects thereof. We may at least
 discern and shew very conspicuous footsteps of divine **Καθ' ἑαυτὴν**
 grace, working in part, and producing no despicable fruits **ἰδιαιτὰ ἔργα**
 of moral virtue, (of justice and honesty, temperance and so- **καὶ ἡ φιλοσο-**
 briety, benignity and bounty, courage and constancy in **φία τοῦ ἐλ-**
 worthy enterprises, meekness, patience, modesty, prudence, **λπίος.**
 and discretion, yea, of piety and devotion in some manner,) **Clem. Alex.**
 even among Pagans, which if we do not allow to have
 been in all respects so complete, as to instate the persons
 endued with them, or practisers of them, in God's fa-
 vour, or to bring them to salvation^a; yet those qualities
 and actions (in degree, or in matter at least, so good and
 so conformable to God's law) we can hardly deny to have
 been the gifts of God, and the effects of divine grace;
 they at least themselves acknowledged so much; for, *Nulla*

^a Mortalem vitam habere possunt, æternam conferre non possunt. *Pro-*
per in Collat. cap. 26.

(*Prodest ad salutem. Aug. Propter, Filios. &c.*)

Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit. *Cic. de Nat.*
Deorum ii. sub fin.

SERM.
LXXII.

*fine Deo mens bona est, No mind is good without God, said Seneca^o; and, Θεία μοίρα φαίνεται παραγιννομένη ἡ ἀρετή, οἷς παραγίνεται, Virtue appears to proceed from a divine dispensation to them who partake of it, said Socrates^p; and, Αἱ ἀρίσται φύσεις, ἀμφοσθητήσιμοι ἐν μετρίῳ τῆς ἀκρας ἀρετῆς πρὸς τὴν ἐσχάτην μοχθηρίαν καθάρμισμέναι, δεόνται ξυναγαγίσεθαι θεῷ καὶ ξυλλήπτορος τῆς ἐπὶ τὰ βέτερα τὰ κρείττω βουῆς καὶ χειραγωγίας. The best natured souls being constituted in the middle between the highest virtue and extreme wickedness, do need God to be their succourer and assistant in the inclining and leading them to the better side; said Max. Tyr. xxii. St. Austin himself, who seems the least favourable in his judgment concerning their actions and state, who calls their virtues but images and shadows of virtue (*non veras, sed verisimiles*) splendid sins; acknowledges those virtuous dispositions and deeds to be the gifts of God, to be laudable, to procure some reward, to avail so far, that they, because of them, shall receive a more tolerable and mild treatment from divine justice; which things considered, such persons do at least, by virtue of grace imparted to them, obtain some part of salvation, or an imperfect kind of salvation, which they owe to our Lord; and in regard whereto he may be called in a sort their Saviour.*

—Dei dona. Epist.
130. Aug.

But although the torrent of natural pravity hath prevailed so far, as that we cannot assign or nominate any (among those who have lived out of the pale) who certainly or probably have obtained salvation, yet doth it not follow thence, that a sufficient grace was wanting to them. The most universal practice contrary to the intents of grace doth not evince a defect of grace. For we see that the same cause hath in a manner universally overborne

• Sen. Ep. 73.

—Quæ secundum justitiæ regulam non solum vituperare non possumus, sed etiam merito recteque laudamus. Aug. de Spir. et Lit. cap. 27.

^p Plat. Menon. ad finem.

^q Tolerabilius puniuntur. Minus Fabricius quam Catilina punitur, &c. —non veras virtutes habendo, sed a veris virtutibus non plurimum deviando. Aug.

and defeated other means and methods designed and dispensed by God for the instruction and emendation of mankind. SERM. LXXII.

God's Spirit did long strive with the inhabitants of the *old world*: yet no more than one family was bettered or saved thereby. God by his good Spirit instructed the Israelites in the wilderness, as Nehemiah saith, yet no more than two persons did get into Canaan: that people afterward had afforded to them great advantages of knowledge and excitements to piety, (so that God intimates, that he could not have done more for them, in that regard, than he had done.) Yet, *There is none that understandeth, or seeketh after God*, was a complaint in the best times. The Pagans had the means of knowing God, as St. Paul affirmeth, yet generally they grew vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; from which like cases and examples we may infer, that divine grace might be really imparted, although no effect correspondent to its main design were produced. Neither, because we cannot allege any evident instances of persons converted or saved by virtue of this grace, (this *parcior occultiorque gratia*, *more sparing and secret grace*, as the good writer *de Vocatione Gentium* calls it,) are we forced to grant there were none such; but as in Israel when Elias said, the children of Israel have *forsaken God's covenant, thrown down his altars, and slain his prophets with the sword; and I, I only am left*; there were yet in Israel, living closely, *seven thousand knees, who had not bowed to Baal*: so among the generations of men, commonly overgrown with ignorance and impiety, there might, for all that we can know, be divers persons indiscernible to common view, who, by complying with the influences of God's grace, have obtained competently to know God, and to reverence him; sincerely to love goodness, and hate wickedness; with an honest heart, to observe the laws of reason and righteousness, in such a manner and degree which God might accept; so that the grace afforded might not only *sufficere omnibus in testimonium*, (*suffice to convince all men*), but *quibusdam in remedium*, (*to correct and cure some*), as that

Gen. vi. 3.
1 Pet. iii. 20.

Neh. ix. 20.

Isa. v. 4.
Psal. xiv.

Rom. i. 21.

1 Kings
xix. 14, 18

- SERM. LXXII.** writer *de Voc. Gent.* speaks. The consideration of God's nature and providence doth serve farther to persuade the truth of this assertion. If God be *rich in mercy* and bounty toward all his creatures, as such, (and such he frequently asserts himself to be,) if he be all-present and all-provident, as he certainly is, how can we conceive him to stand as an unconcerned spectator of what men do, in affairs of this consequence? That he should be present beholding men to run precipitantly into desperate mischiefs and miscarriages, without offering to stay or obstruct them; struggling with their vices and follies, without affording them any relief or furtherance; assaulted by strong temptations, without yielding any support or succour; panting after rest and ease, without vouchsafing some guidance and assistance toward the obtaining them? How can he see men invincibly erring and inevitably sinning, without making good what the Psalmist says of
- Psal. xxv. 8.** him: *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way*; to withhold his grace in such cases, seemeth inconsistent with the kind and compassionate nature of God, especially such as now it stands, being reconciled to mankind, by the *Mediator of God and men, Christ Jesus*. He also, that is so bountiful and indulgent toward all men in regard to their bodies and temporal state; *who preserveth their life from destruction, who protecteth them continually from danger and mischief*; *who openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desires of every living thing; who satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness*; who, as St. Paul speaketh, *fillieth men's hearts with food and gladness*; is it likely that he should altogether neglect their spiritual welfare, and leave their souls utterly destitute of all sustenance or comfort; that he should suffer them to lie fatally exposed to eternal death and ruin, without offering any means of redress or recovery? To conceive so of God, seemed very unreasonable even to a Pagan philosopher: *Do you think, saith Max. Tyrius, that divination, poetry, and such like things, are by divine inspiration insinuated into men's souls, and that virtue* (so much better, and so much rarer a thing)
- Max. Tyr. Diff. 22.**

is the work of moral art? You have forsooth a worthy con-
 ceit of God, who take him to be liberal in bestowing mean-
 things, and sparing of better things. He that, as St. Paul
 saith, giveth to all men life, breath, and all things, will he
 withhold from any that best of gifts, and most worthy of
 him to give, that grace whereby he may be able to serve
 him, to praise him, to glorify him, yea, to please and
 gratify him; to save a creature and subject of his; the
 thing wherein he so much delighteth? From hence also,
 that God hath vouchsafed general testimonies of his good-
 ness, inducements to seek him, footsteps whereby he may
 be discovered and known, a light of reason and law of
 nature written upon men's hearts; attended with satisfac-
 tions, and checks of conscience; so many dispositions to
 knowledge and obedience, as St. Paul teacheth us; we
 may collect that he is not deficient in communicating in-
 terior assistances, promoting the good use and improve-
 ment of those talents; for that otherwise the bestowing
 them is frustraneous and useless; being able to produce
 no good effect; yea, it rather is an argument of unkind-
 ness, being apt only to produce an ill effect in those upon
 whom it is conferred; an aggravation of sin, an accumu-
 lation of guilt and wrath upon them.

If it be said, that having such grace is inconsistent with
 the want of an explicit knowledge of Christ, and of faith
 in him; why may not we say, that as probably (so St.
 Chrysostom, *vid. Mont. App. I.*) most good people before
 our Lord's coming received grace without any such
 knowledge or faith; that as to idiots and infants, our Sa-
 viour's meritorious performances are applied (in a manner
 unknowable by us) without so much as a capacity to
 know or believe any thing; that so we (to whom God's
 judgments are inscrutable, and his ways uninvestigable)
 know not how grace may be communicated unto, and
 Christ's merits may avail for other ignorant persons? in
 respect to whom we may apply that of St. John; *The*

SERM.
LXXII.

Acts xvii.
25.

Acts xiv.
17. xvii. 27.
Rom. i. 19.
ii. 15.

Rom. xi.
33.

John i. 5.

Ἡ πολλὴ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ, πρὸς μὲν τὰ φαινόμενα καλῶς ἐξ ἀφάντων παρατηρεῖται
 αἰεὶ, πρὸς δὲ τὰ κρυπτοῦ ἀποκρύφει.

SERM. LXXII. *light shineth in darknes, and the darknes comprehended it not.* However, that such persons may have a grace, capacifying them to arrive to that knowledge and faith, to which fuller communications of grace are promised; so that in reasonable esteem (as we shall presently shew) the revelation of evangelical truth, and the gift of faith, may be supposed to be conferred upon all men—so that we may apply to them that in the Revelation; *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him, and he with me;* (that is, Behold, I allure every man to the knowledge and embracing of Christianity; if any man will open his mind and heart, so as to comply with my solicitations, I am ready to bestow upon him the participation of evangelical mercies and blessings :) and to such persons those promises and rules in the Gospel may appertain; *He that asketh receiveth; he that seeketh findeth; to him that knocketh it shall be opened: The heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. He that is ἐν ἰσχυρίᾳ πιστός, (faithful in the use of the least grace,) shall be rewarded.* And, *To him that hath (or that diligently keepeth and husbandeth what he hath) shall more be given.*

Rev. iii. 20. *Εἰ τυφλὸς ᾖ, ὅς ἐστι ἐν τῇ πόλει, ἡ ἀκούσας μου ἀνοίξας τὴν θύραν, καὶ ἐγὼ εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς αὐτὸν, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἕσθωμεν, καὶ αὐτὸς μετ' ἐμοῦ.*
 John ix. 41. *καὶ οὐκ ᾔδει ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἐμεθ' ἡμεῖς.*
 Luke xi. 10, 13. *ὁ ἀκούων ἐμὴν φωνὴν καὶ ἀνοίξας τὴν θύραν, ἐγὼ εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς αὐτὸν, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἕσθωμεν, καὶ αὐτὸς μετ' ἐμοῦ.*
 Luke xix. 17. *ὁ ἀκούων ἐμὴν φωνὴν καὶ ἀνοίξας τὴν θύραν, ἐγὼ εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς αὐτὸν, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἕσθωμεν, καὶ αὐτὸς μετ' ἐμοῦ.*
 Luke xix. 26. *ὁ ἀκούων ἐμὴν φωνὴν καὶ ἀνοίξας τὴν θύραν, ἐγὼ εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς αὐτὸν, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἕσθωμεν, καὶ αὐτὸς μετ' ἐμοῦ.*

And how God sometimes dealeth with such persons the eminent instances of St. Paul and Cornelius do shew. But concerning this point I spake somewhat before, and have perhaps been too large now; I shall only add that saying of the wise writer *de Voc. Gen.* *A pious mind, faith he, should not, I think, be troubled at that question, which is made concerning the conversion of all, or not all men; if we will not obscure those things which are clear, by those things which are secret; and while we wantonly insist upon things shut up, we be not excluded from those which are open and plain.* Which in effect is the same with this; that since we are plainly taught, that our Lord is the Sa-

* Puto quod pius sensus non debeat in ea quæstione turbari, quæ de omnium et non omnium hominum conversione generatur; si ea quæ clara sunt non de his quæ occulta sunt obsecuremus, et dum procaciter infirmus clausis excludamur ab apertis, &c. *Lib. i. cap. 8.*

viour of all men; and it is consequent thence, that he **SERM.**
hath procured grace sufficiently capacifying all men to **LXXII.**
obtain salvation; we need not perplex the business, or
obscure so apparent a truth, by debating how that grace
is imparted; or by labouring overmuch in reconciling the
dispensation thereof with other dispensations of Provi-
dence.

SERMON LXXIII.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

I TIM. iv. 10.

—*The living God ; who is the Saviour of all men,
especially of those that believe.*

SERM. 5. JESUS is the Saviour of all men, as the conductor of LXXIII. all men into and through the way of salvation. It is a very proper title, and most due to those brave captains, who by their wisdom and valour have freed their country from straits and oppressions. So were those judges and princes, who anciently delivered Israel from their enemies, commonly styled: *In the time of their trouble, say the Levites in Nehemiah, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and, according to thy manifold mercies, thou gavest them Saviours, who saved them out of the hand of the enemy;* so are Othniel and Ehud particularly called; and Moses signally: *The same, saith St. Stephen of him, did God send to be ἀρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτὴν, a Commander and a Saviour (or Redeemer) to the children of Israel;* for that he by a worthy and happy conduct did free them from the Egyptian slavery. And thus was Demetrius by the Athenians (for his delivering them from the Macedonian subjection, and restoring their liberty to them) entitled, *εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτὴρ, a benefactor and saviour.* Thus with greatest reason is Jesus so called, Heb. ii. 10. as being ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας, *the Captain of Salvation,* Acts iii. 15. (so he is called by the Apostle to the Hebrews,) ἀρχηγὸς

ζῶης, (the Captain of Life, as St. Peter names him, the **SERM.**
chief Leader unto eternal life,) ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως, (the Cap- **LXXIII.**
tain of our Faith; he that hath revealed that saving doc- **Heb. xii. 2.**
trine, which is the power of God to salvation :) and these **Rom. i. 16.**
titles we have conjoined by St. Peter in the Acts; **Him** **Acts v. 31.**
hath God exalted, ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα, as a Captain and a
Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of
 sins. This he is to us several ways, by direction both in-
structive and exemplary; by his protection and govern-
ance; by his mating and quelling the enemies of man's
salvation; which things more specially and completely he
hath performed in respect to faithful Christians, yet in a
manner also he hath truly done them for and toward all
men; as we shall distinctly consider.

6. Jesus is *the Saviour of all men*, we say, as having
perfectly discovered and demonstrated the way and means
of salvation; the gracious purposes of God concerning
it; the duties required by God in order to it; the great
helps and encouragements to seek it; the mighty deter-
ments from neglecting it; the whole will of God, and
concernment of man in relation thereto; briefly, all saving
truths he hath revealed unto all men: *mysteries of truth,* **Col. i. 26.**
which were hidden from ages and generations, which no **Rom. xvi. 25.**
fancy of man could invent, no understanding could reach,
no reason could by discussion clear, (concerning the na-
ture, providence, will, and purpose of God; the nature,
original, and state of man; concerning the laws and rules
of practice, the helps thereto, the rewards thereof, what-
ever is important for us to know in order to happiness,)
he did plainly discover, and bring to light; he did with
valid sorts of demonstration assert and confirm. The doing
which, (as having so much efficacy toward salvation, and
being ordinarily so necessary thereto,) is often called *sav-*
ing; as particularly by St. James; when he saith, **He** **Jam. v. 20.**
that turns a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a
soul from death. And by St. Paul; **Take heed to thy** **1 Tim. iv. 16.**
word and doctrine; for so doing thou shalt save thyself, and
thy hearers. That our Lord hath thus (according to his
design, and according to reasonable esteem) *saved all men,* **1 Cor. ix. 22.**

- SERM.** we are authorized by the holy Scripture to say ; for he is
- LXXIII.** there represented to be *the light of the world; the true light that enlighteneth every man coming into the world: the day-spring from on high, which hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace.* By him the saving grace of God hath appeared unto all men. By him (as Isaiah prophesied, and St. John the Baptist applied it) *all flesh did see the salvation of God.* Of him it was also foretold, as St. Paul teacheth us, *I have set thee for the light of the nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. Coming he preached peace τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἱγγύς (longe lateque) to them that were far, and them that were near, that is, to all men every where.*
- Rom. xi.** *While I am in the world,* said he, *I am the light of the world; shining, like the sun, indifferently unto all; and when he withdrew his corporal presence, he farther virtually diffused his light, for he sent his messengers with a general commission and command to teach all men concerning the benefits procured for them, and the duties required from them; Going into the world, make all nations disciples, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. Going into the world, preach the Gospel unto every creature, (or, to the whole creation: so it ought to be.)*
- Mat. xxviii. 19, 20.** *That in his name should be preached repentance and remission of sins unto all nations.* And such was the tenor of the apostolical commission; *Thou shalt be witness for him toward all men,* said Ananias to St. Paul. Accordingly, in compliance with those orders, did the Apostles, in God's name, instruct and admonish all men, plainly teaching, seriously inviting to, strongly persuading, and earnestly entreating all men to embrace the truth, and enjoy the benefits of the Gospel, and consequently to be saved: *The times of ignorance, saith St. Paul, God having winked at, doth now invite all men every where to repent: and, We are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God—We pray you, you as members of that world, which God was in Christ reconciling to himself; and, We preach*
- 2 Tim. iii. 15.** *as Isaiah prophesied, and St. John the Baptist applied it)*
- John viii. 12. i. 9.** *all flesh did see the salvation of God.*
- Luke i. 79.** *Of him it was also foretold, as St. Paul teacheth us, I have set thee for the light of the nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.*
- Tit. ii. 11.** *Coming he preached peace τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἱγγύς (longe lateque) to them that were far, and them that were near, that is, to all men every where.*
- 2 Tim. i. 10.** *While I am in the world, said he, I am the light of the world; shining, like the sun, indifferently unto all; and when he withdrew his corporal presence, he farther virtually diffused his light, for he sent his messengers with a general commission and command to teach all men concerning the benefits procured for them, and the duties required from them; Going into the world, make all nations disciples, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. Going into the world, preach the Gospel unto every creature, (or, to the whole creation: so it ought to be.)*
- Luke iii. 6.** *That in his name should be preached repentance and remission of sins unto all nations.*
- Acts xiii. 47.** *And such was the tenor of the apostolical commission; Thou shalt be witness for him toward all men, said Ananias to St. Paul. Accordingly, in compliance with those orders, did the Apostles, in God's name, instruct and admonish all men, plainly teaching, seriously inviting to, strongly persuading, and earnestly entreating all men to embrace the truth, and enjoy the benefits of the Gospel, and consequently to be saved: The times of ignorance, saith St. Paul, God having winked at, doth now invite all men every where to repent: and, We are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God—We pray you, you as members of that world, which God was in Christ reconciling to himself; and, We preach*
- Eph. ii. 17.** *as Isaiah prophesied, and St. John the Baptist applied it)*
- John ix. 5.** *all flesh did see the salvation of God.*
- Mat. xxviii. 19, 20.** *Of him it was also foretold, as St. Paul teacheth us, I have set thee for the light of the nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.*
- Mark xvi. 15.** *Coming he preached peace τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἱγγύς (longe lateque) to them that were far, and them that were near, that is, to all men every where.*
- Luke xxiv. 47.** *While I am in the world, said he, I am the light of the world; shining, like the sun, indifferently unto all; and when he withdrew his corporal presence, he farther virtually diffused his light, for he sent his messengers with a general commission and command to teach all men concerning the benefits procured for them, and the duties required from them; Going into the world, make all nations disciples, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you. Going into the world, preach the Gospel unto every creature, (or, to the whole creation: so it ought to be.)*
- Acts xxii. 15. xxvi. 17.** *That in his name should be preached repentance and remission of sins unto all nations.*
- Acts xvii. 30.** *And such was the tenor of the apostolical commission; Thou shalt be witness for him toward all men, said Ananias to St. Paul. Accordingly, in compliance with those orders, did the Apostles, in God's name, instruct and admonish all men, plainly teaching, seriously inviting to, strongly persuading, and earnestly entreating all men to embrace the truth, and enjoy the benefits of the Gospel, and consequently to be saved: The times of ignorance, saith St. Paul, God having winked at, doth now invite all men every where to repent: and, We are ambassadors for Christ; as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God—We pray you, you as members of that world, which God was in Christ reconciling to himself; and, We preach*
- 2 Cor. v. 20.** *as Isaiah prophesied, and St. John the Baptist applied it)*
- Colos. i. 28.** *all flesh did see the salvation of God.*

Christ—warning every man, and teaching every man in SERM.
all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ LXXIII.
Jesus, (or, render every man a good Christian.) Thus was Acts ii. 40.
the Gospel, according to our Saviour's intent and order,
preached, as St. Paul saith of it, *ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν*
οὐρανόν, in the whole creation under heaven; thus did God Col. i. 23.
shew, that he would have all men to be saved, and to come 1 Tim. ii. 4.
to the knowledge of the truth; whence our Lord (in re-
gard to the nature and design of his performance in this
kind) is the common Saviour, as the common master of
truth, and enlightener of the world, and proclaimer of John i. 12.
God's will to mankind.

If now it be inquired or objected; why then is not the
Gospel revealed unto all men? How comes it to pass, that
no sound of this saving word, no glimpse of this heavenly
light, doth arrive to many nations? How can so general
and large intention consist with so particular and sparing
execution? What benefit can we imagine them capable
to receive from this performance of our Saviour, who still Luke i. 74.
do sit in total ignorance of the Gospel, in darkness, and Matt. iv. 16.
the shadow of death? *How can they call upon him in* Rom. x. 14.
whom they believe not? And how can they believe in him
of whom they have not heard?

To this suggestion I answer,

1. That God's intentions are not to be interpreted, nor
his performances estimated by events, depending on the
contingency of human actions, but by his own declara-
tions and precepts, together with the ordinary provision of
competent means, in their own nature sufficient to pro-
duce those effects which he declares himself to intend or
to perform. What he reveals himself to design, he doth
really design it; what he says, that he performeth; he
(according to moral esteem, that is, so far as to ground
duties of gratitude and honour, proceedings of justice and
reward) doth perform, although the thing upon other ac-
counts be not effected.

Thus, for instance, God would have all men to live to-
gether here in peace, in order, in health, conveniently,
comfortably, cheerfully; according to reason, with virtue

SERM. and justice; and in the best state toward happiness: for
LXXIIN. these purposes he hath endued them with reasonable faculties, he hath engraven on their minds a natural law, he hath furnished them with all sorts of instruments and helps conducive to those ends; he promoteth them by dispensations of providence, and, probably, by internal influences of grace: yet often all those means, by the perverseness and stupidity of men, do prove ineffectual, so that wars, disorders, diseases, vices, iniquities and oppressions, troubles and miseries, do commonly abound in the world. Likewise God desires, that in his church, knowledge and piety, peace and charity, and good order should grow and flourish; to which purposes he hath appointed teachers to instruct, and governors to watch over his people: he hath obliged each man to advise and admonish his brother; he hath declared holy precepts and rules of practice; he hath propounded vast encouragements and rewards, and threatened dreadful punishments; he hath promised and doth afford requisite assistances; being himself always present and ready to promote those ends by his grace: yet notwithstanding, by the voluntary neglect or abuse of these means, (the guides being blind, negligent, unfaithful; or the people being indocile, sluggish, refractory; or both perverted with bad affections,) often ignorance, error, and impiety prevail, love is cool and dead, schisms and factions are rife in the church. Which events are not to be conceived derogatory to God's good-will and good intentions, or to his kind and careful providence toward men; but we are notwithstanding to esteem and acknowledge him the author and donor of those good things; in respect to them no less blessing and praising him, than if they were really accomplished by man's concurrence and compliance; he having done his part in that due measure and manner which wisdom prompts; having indeed done the same, as when they are effected. So God having expressly declared, that he would have all men to know and embrace the Gospel, having made a universal promulgation thereof, having sent forth Apostles to disseminate it every where, having obliged every man to confer his best

endeavour toward the propagation thereof; if by the **SERM.**
want of fidelity, zeal, or industry in them, to whom this **LXXIII.**
care is intrusted, or upon whom this duty is incumbent;

or if by the carelessness and stupidity of those, who do not regard what is done in the world; or if by men's voluntary shutting their eyes, or stopping their ears, (as the Jews did of old to the prophetic instructions and admonitions,) God's heavenly truth becometh not universally known, it is not reasonable to impute this default to God, or to conceive him therefore not universally to desire and design men's instruction and salvation consequent thereon. Let me, for the illustration of this matter, put a case, or propound a similitude. Suppose a great kingdom, consisting of several provinces, should have revolted from their sovereign; disclaiming his authority, neglecting and disobeying his laws; that the good prince, out of his goodness and pity toward them, (and upon other good considerations moving him thereto, suppose the mediation of his own son,) instead of prosecuting them with deserved vengeance, should grant a general pardon and amnesty, in these terms, or upon these conditions; that whoever of those rebels willingly should come in, acknowledge his fault, and promise future loyalty, or obedience to his laws declared to them, should be received into favour, have impunity, enjoy protection, and obtain rewards from him. Farther, for the effectuating this gracious intent, suppose that he should appoint and commissionate messengers, empowering and charging them to divulge the purport of this act of grace to all the people of that kingdom. Admit now, that these messengers should go forth and seat themselves only in some provinces of that kingdom, proclaiming this universal pardon (universal as to the design, and as to the tenor thereof) only in those, neglecting others; or that striving to propagate it farther, they should be rejected and repelled; or that from any the like cause the knowledge thereof should not reach to some remoter provinces; it is plain, that indeed the effect of that pardon would be obstructed by such a carriage of the affair; but

SERM. the tenor of that act would not thereby be altered; not
LXXIII. would the failure in execution (consequent upon the ministers' or the people's misbehaviour) detract from the real amplitude of the prince's intent; no more, than the wilful incredulity, refusal, or non-compliance of some persons, where the business is promulged and notified, would prejudice the same. It is plain the prince meant favourably toward all, and provided carefully for them; although by accident (not imputable to him) the designed favours and benefits do not reach all. The case so plainly suits our purpose, that I need not make any application. The holy Fathers do by several like similitudes endeavour to illustrate this matter, and somewhat to assail the difficulty. They compare our Saviour to the sun ^a, who shines indifferently to all the world, although there be some private corners and secret caves, to which his light doth not come; although some shut their windows or their eyes, and exclude it; although some are blind, and do not see it. ^b That mystical Sun of Righteousness, saith St. Ambrose, is risen to all, came to all, did suffer and rose again for all—but if any one doth not believe in Christ, he defrauds himself of the general benefit. As if one shutting the windows should exclude the beams of the sun, the sun is not therefore not risen to all. ^c They compare our Lord to a physician, who professes to relieve and cure all that shall have recourse to his help; but doth cure only

^a Ἀκούσκει οὖν οἱ μακρὰν ἀκούσκει οἱ ἱγγύς· οὐκ ἀπεκρύβη τις τὸς ὁ λόγος· ὥς ἐστι ποινὸν, ἐπιλάμπει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· ὅδ' ἐστις Κεκμήριος ἐν λόγῳ. *Clem. Alex. Protrep.*

Hear ye that are far: hear ye that are near: the word is not hid to any: it is a common light: it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian in the Word.

^b Mysticus Sol ille justitiæ omnibus ortus est, omnibus venit, omnibus passus est, et omnibus surrexit—si quis autem non credit in Christum, generali beneficio se fraudat, ut si quis clausis fenestris radios solis excludat, non ideo sol non ortus est omnibus, &c. *Amb. in Psal. cxviii. Ser. viii.*

Si dies omnibus æqualiter nascitur, et si sol super omnes pari et æquali luce diffunditur, quanto magis Christus Sol et dies verus, in Ecclesia sua lumen vitæ æternæ pari æqualitate largitur. *Cypr. Epist. 76.*

^c Nunquid non medicus idcirco proponit in publico, ut omnes se ostendat velle salvere si velint. *Amb. i. tom. 2.*

those who seek for remedy, and are willing to take the medicine; because all, saith St. Ambrose again, do not desire cure, but most do shun it, lest the ulcer should smart by medicaments; therefore *volentes curat, non astringit invitos*; he cures only the willing, doth not compel those that are unwilling; they only receive health, who desire medicine^d. Evangelical grace, say they, is like a fountain standing openly, to which all men have free access; at which all men may quench their thirst, if they will inquire after it, and go thereto. *The fountain of life*, saith Arnobius, *is open to all; nor is any man hindered or driven from the right of drinking it*^e. The covenant of grace is, say they, a door standing open to all, whereinto all have liberty to enter—*When an entrance*, saith St. Chrysostom, *being opened to all, and there being nothing that hinders, some being wilfully naught abide without, they have no other but their own wickedness to impute their destruction unto*^f.

And again he puts the question, *If Christ enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world, how is it that so many remain unenlightened?* &c. To which he answers, *That if some, wilfully shutting the eyes of their minds, will not receive the beams of this light, it is not from the nature of light that those remain still in darkness, but from the wickedness of those who wilfully deprive themselves of the gift of it*, &c. &

^d Venit—ut vulnera nostra curaret, sed quia non omnes medicinam expetunt, sed plerique refugiant, ne medicamentis compungatur vis ulceris, ideo volentes, &c. *Ambr. de David.* iii. 11.

^e Patet omnibus fons vitæ, neque ab jure potandi quisquam prohibetur, aut pellitur. *Arnob.* lib. 2.

^f Ὅταν τῆς ἡμετέρας πᾶσι ἀνοργάνως, καὶ μηδενὸς τοῦ σωλόντος ὄντος, ἰδεομακῆσταις τινὲς ἔξῃ μύσει, παρ' οὐδενὸς ἵταρον, ἀλλ' ἢ παρὰ τὴν αἰσίου ποτηρίαν ἀπάλυνται. *Chrys.* in *Joh.* i. *Homil.* 7.

§ Εἰ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενοι εἰς τὸν κόσμον, πῶς ἀφώτισται μερὴν καὶ ἀσθενεῖ; οὐ γὰρ δὴ πάντας ἐκτίθει τοῦ Χριστοῦ τὸ εἶδος· πῶς οὖν φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον; τίνα εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκκει· εἰ δὲ τινὲς ἐκόντες τὰς τῆς διανοίας ὀφθαλμοὺς μύσαντες, οὐκ ἰδίδμεν παραδίξασθαι τοῦ φωτός τούτου τὰς ἀπείνας, οὐ παρὰ τὴν τοῦ φωτός φύσιν ἢ ἐκτίθειαι ἐκείνους, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν ἀκαουρησίαν τῶν ἐκόντων ἀποστρέφοντων ἑαυτοὺς τῆς δορυῆς· ἢ μὲν γὰρ χεῖρας εἰς πάντας ἐκτείνονται—πάντως δὲ ἡμεῖς προση-

SERM. LXXIII. St. Gregory Nazianzen resembles the grace of baptism (as to its community and freedom of use) to the breathing of the air, to the spreading of light, to the vicissitude of seasons, to the aspect of the creation^b; things most obvious and common to all.

If this answer do not fully satisfy, I adjoin farther,

2. That God, beside that ordinary provision, is ready to interpose extraordinarily in disclosing his truth to them who are worthy of such favour, and fit to receive it; and that God's general desire and design of revealing his truth to all men is very well consistent with his providential (not only negative and permissive, but even positive and active) withholding the discovery thereof from some persons, yea some nations; for that neither his wisdom, goodness, or justice might permit him, that he should impart that revelation to such persons whom he seeth altogether indisposed to comply therewith, and unfit to profit thereby; who have extremely abused the lesser graces, and not improved or misimproved the lesser talents afforded them; detained inferior truths in unrighteousness, and *have not liked to retain God in their knowledge*, have therefore justly been delivered up to a reprobate sense; who have so depraved their minds with wicked prejudices and affections, that the truth being offered to them, they would certainly either stupidly neglect it, or scornfully reject it; or if admitting it in shew, would unworthily abuse it; so that from the imparting the means of knowing it, no glory to God, no benefit to man would accrue, but rather contempt of God and prejudice to men would ensue upon it: there are some persons of that wicked and *gigantic* disposition, (contracted by evil practice,) that, should one offer to instruct them in truth, or move them to piety, would be ready to say with Polyphemus in Homer, *Odysf. l. 273, 4.*

Rom. i. 18,
28.

Isa. xxx.
10.

αμίνη καὶ μετὰ τῆς ἰσῆς καλοῦσα τιμῆς· εἰ δὲ μὴ θύλοντες ἀπελαύνου τῆς δικαίας ταύτης, ταῦτοις δικάσι ταύτην εἰ εἰν λογισάσθαι τῆς πέμψου. *Chrys. in Joh. i. Homil. 7.*

^b — ὡς αἶρας πνῦσιν, ὡς φωτὸς χύσιν, καὶ ὡρῶν ἀλλαγῆς, & πείστης θύλου. *Naz. Orat. 40.*

Νῆπιος εἰς, ὃ ξηρὸς, ἢ πολλὰς ἐκλήσας,
Ὅς με θανάς κλέμει ἢ διδύμω, ἢ ἀλέσας.

SERM.
LXXIII.

Friend, you are a fool, or a great stranger to me,
Who advisest me to fear or regard the Deity.

Or (which is the same) with Pharaoh: *Who is the Lord*, Exod. v. 2: *that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*, (or neither will I do as you in God's name admonish me;) who, like that unhappy prince, by Prov. i. 24. no efficacy of arguments, no wonders of power are to be convinced of their folly, or converted from their wickedness: some, like those of Chorazin and Bethsaida, whom Luke x. 13. not all the powerful discourses spoken to them, all the mighty works done in them, sufficient to have brought Tyre and Sidon to repentance, can induce to mind or obey the truth: unto which sort of people (except upon some particular occasions, and for special reasons) it is not expedient that divine truth should be exposed. We may also observe how our Lord being asked by St. Jude a question like to ours; *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself* John xiv. 22. *unto us, and not to the world?* thus resolves it: *If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*: implying the ordinary reason of God's making a difference in the discoveries of himself to be the previous disposition and behaviours of men toward God; and interpretatively toward our Lord himself.

That God doth commonly observe this method (plainly suitable to divine justice, wisdom, and goodness) to dispense the revelation of his truth according to men's disposition to receive it, and aptness to make a fruitful and worthy use of it, *to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, Matt. iii. 8. as St. John Baptist spake; and to withhold it from those 1 Cor. xii. 7. who are indisposed to admit it, or unfit to profit by it; we may from divers express passages and notable instances (beside many probable intimations) of Scripture learn. We may on the one hand observe, that those whom our Saviour did choose to call, were persons disposed easily upon his call to comply; to forsake their fathers and their nets; to leave their receipts of custom; to relinquish

Matt. iv. 19.
John i. 24,
37.
Matt. xix.
27.

SERM. all, (relations, occupations, estates,) and to follow him;
LXXIII. faithful Israelites, without guile, like Nathaniel, (that is,
 John i. 47. as is probably conjectured, St. Bartholomew;) men ho-
 Luke xix. nestly devout, and charitable, like Zaccheus; that he chose
 8, 9. to converse with publicans and sinners, men apt to be con-
 Matt. xxi. vinced of their errors, and touched with the sense of their
 31. sins; apt to see their need of mercy and grace, and there-
 Luke v. 31. fore ready to entertain the overtures of them; that he
 blesses God for revealing his mysteries to babes, (to inno-
 cent and well meaning, imprejudicate and uncorrupted
 persons,) such as if men were not, they could in nowise
 enter into the kingdom of heaven, or become Christians;
 Matt. xviii. those *poor in spirit, of whom is the kingdom of heaven;*
 8. xix. 14. those *foolish things* which God chooseth as most fit objects
 v. 3. of his mercy and grace; that he enjoined his disciples, in
 1 Cor. i. 27. their travels for the promulgation and propagation of the
 Gospel, to inquire concerning the worthiness or fitness of
 persons, and accordingly to make more close applications
 Matt. x. 11. to them: *Into what city or village ye enter, inquire who*
therein is worthy; and entering in abide there. Of this
 proceeding we have a notable instance in Cornelius, who
 for his honest piety (correspondent to the proportion of
 knowledge vouchsafed him) was so acceptable to God,
 that in regard thereto he obtained from him the revelation
 of truth in a peculiar and extraordinary manner. And St.
 Paul was another most remarkable example thereof; who
 for the like reason was so wonderfully called, as himself in-
 timates, describing himself to have been *ζηλωτὴς Θεοῦ, zealously*
 Acts xxii. *affected toward God, according to the righteousness in*
 8. xxiii. 1. *the law, blameless;* one that had continually behaved him-
 Πιστὸς κατὰ νόμον. self with all good conscience toward God; who even in the
 Phil. iii. 6. persecution of God's truth did proceed with an honest
 Acts xxvi. 9. meaning, and according to his conscience, for which cause
 Gal. i. 14. he saith, that God had mercy on him; foreseeing how
 willingly he would embrace the truth, and how earnestly
 promote it. We may also observe, how in the Acts of the
 Apostles, the Holy Spirit commonly directed the Apostles
 Acts xxvi. to such places, where a competent number of people were
 1 Tim. i. 3. well disposed to receive the truth; who were *εὐθετοὶ εἰς*
 Luke ix. 62. well disposed to receive the truth; who were *εὐθετοὶ εἰς*

τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, well disposed to the kingdom of hea- SERM.
 ven, and consequently by God's foresight (τεταγμένοι εἰς LXXIII.
 ζωὴν αἰώνιον) ordained to have the word of eternal life (the AGS xiii.
 τὸ σωτηρίον Θεοῦ, as it is in a parallel place called) discovered 49. xvii. 11.
 to them; such people as the Bereans, men ingenuous and xxviii. 28.
 tractable; who consequently entertained the word, μετὰ
 πάσης προθυμίας, with all promptitude and alacrity. To
 such persons God sometimes by extraordinary revelation
 directed the Apostles to preach; as to the Corinthians, in
 respect to whom the Lord spake to St. Paul in a vision, say-
 ing, *Fear not, but speak, and be not silent; for I am with* AGS xviii.
thee, because πολὺς ἐστὶ μοι λαός, *there is for me much people* 9, 10.
in this city; much people whom I see disposed to comply
 with my truth. So in behalf of the Macedonians, ἀνὴς τις AGS xvi. 9.
 Μακεδὼν, a certain man of Macedonia, was in a vision seen
 to St. Paul, exhorting him and saying, *Passing into Mace-*
donia, help us. Thus on that hand doth God take special
 care that his truth be manifested to such as are fitly quali-
 fied to embrace it and use it well: thus is God ready to
 make good that answer of Pothinus (Bishop of Lions, and
 immediate successor to St. Irenæus) to the prefect, who
 asking him *who was the Christians' God*, was answered, 'Εὰν Euseb. v. 1.
 ᾗς ἀξίως γνώσῃ, *If thou be worthy, thou shalt know*; thus, as
 the Wise Man divinely saith, the divine Wisdom, ἀξίως αὐ- Wisd. vi. 16.
 τῆς περιέχεται ζητῆσαι, *goeth about seeking such as are worthy*
of her; sheweth herself favourable unto them in their ways,
and meeteth them in every thought.

And on the other hand, that God withholdeth the special
 discoveries of his truth, upon account of men's indispo-
 sitions and demerits, may likewise very plainly appear.
 We may suppose our Lord to have observed himself, what
 he ordered to his disciples; *Not to give that which is holy* Matt. vii. 6.
to dogs, nor to cast their pearls before swine, (not to ex-
 pose the holy and precious truth to very lewd and fierce
 people, who would snarl at it and trample upon it:) we
 may allow God in his dispensation of his truth and grace
 to do what he bids the Apostles to do: before he enters
 into any house, or applies himself to any person, to exa- Εξετάζει.
 mine whether the house or person be worthy, that is, will- Matt. x. 11.

SERM. ing to receive him, and apt to treat him well; if not, to
LXXIII. decline them. Our Lord, we see, did leave even his own

Matt. xiii.
 47, 48.

country, seeing men there were not disposed to use him with due honour and regard; seeing they were possessed with vain prejudices, apt to obstruct the efficacy of his divine instructions and miraculous performances; so that he was not likely (according to the ordinary way of divine providence) to produce any considerable effect towards their conversion. *He could not, it is said, do many miracles there, because of their unbelief;* he could not, that is, according to the most just and wise rules he did observe, he would not do them; because he perceived the doing them would not conduce to any good purpose; that they were not apt to look upon those works as the effects of divine power and goodness, performed for their benefit, (for inducing them to faith and repentance,) but rather that the doing them would expose God's mercy to contempt or reproach, at least to neglect or disregard.

1 Cor. ii.
 14.

Matt. xxi.
 81.

Hence our Saviour declined conversing with persons indisposed to (those *ψυχικοί*, who cannot *δέχσθαι τὰ τῆ πνεύματος*) receive benefit by his instruction and example; to grow wiser or better by his conversation; as the Pharisees and Scribes; men prepossessed with corrupt opinions and vicious affections, obstructive to the belief of his doctrine and observance of his laws; and worldly persons; proud and selfconceited, crafty and deceitful, covetous, ambitious, and worldly men, incorrigibly tinctured with

Rom. viii.
 7.

James iv. 4.

1 John ii.
 15.

that *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός*, carnal wisdom and affection; which is enmity to God; so that it is not subject to the law of God, nor can be; inextricably engaged in the friendship of the world, which is enmity to God: to such men the Gospel would certainly be a scandal or a folly:

1 Cor. i. 23.

they would never be able to relish or digest the doctrine of purity, self-denial, patience, and the like doctrines opposite to carnal sense and conceit which it teacheth.

Mat. xi. 25.

From such wise and prudent men (conceited of their little wisdoms, and doting upon their own fancies) God did conceal those heavenly mysteries, which they would have

1 Cor. i. 26.
James ii. 5.

despised and derided: those *many wise according to the*

flesh, many powerful, many noble, God did not choose to call into his church. Accordingly we may observe in the history of the Apostles, that God's Spirit did prohibit the Apostles passing through some places, it discerning how unsuccessful (at those seasons, in those circumstances, according to those dispositions of men) their preaching would be: *Passing through Phrygia and Galatia, being hindered by the Spirit to speak the word in Asia; coming to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not.* Moreover there is plainly the like reason, why God should withhold his saving truth from some people, as why he should withdraw it from others; when it is abused or proves fruitless: but of such withdrawing we have many plain instances, attended with the declaration of the reasons of them: our Lord prophesied thus concerning the Jews; *I say unto you, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation doing the fruits thereof;* they, when our Saviour would have gathered them under his wings, wilfully refusing. Our Lord charged his Disciples, when by any they were repulsed or neglected in their preaching, to leave those persons and places, *shaking off the dust from their feet,* in token of an utter (ὡς μαρτύριον ἐκ αὐτῶν) detestation and desertion of them: and accordingly we see them practising in their Acts; when they perceived men perversely contradictory, or desperately senseless and stupid, so that they clamoured against the Gospel, and thrust it from them, they abstained from farther dealing with them, turning their endeavours elsewhere, toward persons of a more docile and ingenuous temper; thence more susceptible of faith and repentance: *To you, say Paul and Barnabas to the contradicting and reproachful Jews, it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken; but seeing you put it from you, (or thrust it away from you, ἀποσείοντε αὐτὸν,) and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, we turn to the Gentiles.* So when the Church of Ephesus was grown cold in charity, and deficient in good works, God threatens to remove her candlestick; or to withdraw from her that light of truth,

SERM.
LXXIII.

Acts xvi. 6.

Matt. xxi.
43.

Matt. x. 14.

Luke ix. 5.
Acts xiii.
51. xviii. 6.

Acts xiii.
46. xxviii.
26.

Rev. ii. 5.

SERM. which shone with so little beneficial influence. It seems
LXXIII. evident that God for the like reasons may withhold the

*Kai γὰρ τὰς
 ὕς (φασί) τὸ
 μῦθον πείναι.*
Chryf.
John iii. 19. discovery of his truth, or forbear to interpose his provi-
 dence; so as to transmit light thither, where men's deeds
 are so evil, that they will love darkness rather than light;

where their eyes are so dim and weak, that the light
 will but offend, and by the having it, hurt them; where
 they, by the having it declared to them, will only incur
 farther mischief and misery; it would prove to them but
2 Cor. ii. 16. *ὀσμὴ θανάτου*, a deadly scent, as the most comfortable per-
 fumes are offensive sometimes and noxious to distempered
 bodies. Wherefore as where the light doth shine most
 clearly, it is men's voluntary pravity, that by it many are
 not effectually brought to salvation; so it is men's volun-
 tary depraving and corrupting themselves, (misusing their
 natural light, choaking the seeds of natural ingenuity,
 thwarting God's secret whispers and motions, complying
 with the suggestions of the wicked one,) so as to be ren-
 dered unmeet for the susception of God's heavenly truth
 and grace, which hinders God (who proceedeth ordinarily
 with men, in sweet and reasonable methods, not in way
 of impetuous violence and coercion) from dispensing them:

Isa. lxvi. 3. we may say of such in the words of the Prophet, *They*
have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in

Jer. v. 25. *their abominations. Your iniquities have turned away*
these things, and your sins have withholden good things

Baf. in Pfal. xxxiii. *from you. Τῇ ἑαυτῇ ἀγαθότητι πᾶσιν ὁ Κύριος ἐγγύζῃ μακρό-*
νομεν δὲ ἑαυτοὺς ἡμεῖς διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας, God doth by his good-

ness approach to all, but we set ourselves at distance by sin,
 faith St. Basil; and *ὅπου αὐτοσκοπεύεται πονηρία, ἐνῷ καὶ ἀπο-*
χὴ τῆς χάριτος, where there is self-chosen or affected wick-
 edness, there is a withholding of grace, faith another Fa-

2 Cor. iv. 3. ther, (*apud* Cyrill. Hier.) *The Gospel, if it be hidden,*
it is, as St. Paul says, hidden ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, in viris
perditis, among lost men, (that is, men desperately gone in
 wickedness, incorrigible, unreclaimable people,) *in whom*
the God of this world (that is, as St. Chrysostom expounds
 it, not the devil, but the good God himself) *hath blinded*
the minds of them which believe not, so that the light of the

*Εἰς τὸ μὴ
 αἰνέσαι
 αὐτὸν.*
Chryf. in
2 Cor. iv. 4.

glorious Gospel hath not shined to them, (πῶς ἔν ἐτύφλωσεν; SERM. how then did God blind them? saith St. Chrysostom,) οὐκ LXXIII. ἐπργήσας εἰς τοῦτο, ἀπαγε· not by any efficacy of his upon them toward that; fie on that; ἀλλ' ἀφαις καὶ συγχωρήσας, but by permission and concession; for so the Scripture is wont to speak; Ἐπειδὴν γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἠπίστησαν πρῶτοι, καὶ ἀναξίους ἑαυτοὺς κατασκευάσαν τῷ ἰδεῖν τὰ μυστήρια, καὶ αὐτοὺς λοιπὸν εἶασεν· ἀλλὰ τί ἴδω ποιῆσαι; πρὸς βίαν ἔλκεν, καὶ ἐκκαλύπτει μὴ βουλομένοις ἰδεῖν; ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἂν καταφρόνησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἂν εἶδον. Seeing, saith he, they disbelieved first, and constituted themselves unworthy to see the mysteries, even God at last let them alone; for what should he have done? Should he have drawn them violently, and discovered it to them being unwilling to see? They would then have more despised it, and not have seen it. God is ever willing and ready to ^{Luke xix.} dispense his mercies and favours, but he is not wont to do ^{44.} it extraordinarily, (or beside the course of his ordinary pro- ^{2 Cor. vi. 2.} vision,) but in a proper and fit season, (in that καιρὸς εὐπρόσ- ^{Rom. xiii.} ^{11.} δεκτός, acceptable time and day of salvation, when he seeth men capable of receiving them;) which season commonly dependeth upon man's will and choice, or the results of them. Καθόλου γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς εἶδεν τοὺς τε ἀξίους τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ ^{Clem.} μὴ ὄντων τὰ προσήκοντα ἑκάστοις δίδωσιν. Σωτὴρ γάρ ἐστιν οὐχὶ ^{Strom. vii.} τῶν μὲν, τῶν δ' οὐ· πρὸς δὲ ὅσον ἐπιτηδεύοντος ἕκαστος εἶχεν, τὴν ^{p. 103.} ἑαυτῷ διέναιμεν εὐεργεσίαν· for (saith Clemens Alex. in his 7th of the Stromata, where he clearly and fully affirms our present doctrine) Our Lord is not the Saviour of some and not of others: but, according as men are fitly disposed, he hath distributed his beneficence to all. St. Augustine ^{Quæst. 68.} himself somewhere speaketh no less; or rather more: ^{c Quæst. 83.} ^{Tom. iv.} ^{Part. i.} ^{Venit de} ^{occultiffi-} ^{mis meritis,} ^{&c. Ibid.} Præcedit aliquid in peccatoribus, saith he, quo, quamvis nondum sint justificati, digni efficiantur justificatione: et idem præcedit in aliis peccatoribus quo digni sint obtusione. But,

3. If all these considerations do not thoroughly satisfy us concerning the reason of God's proceedings in this case, we may consider that God's providence is inscrutable and impenetrable to us; that, according to the Psalmist, as God's mercy is in the heavens, and his faithfulness ^{Psal. xxxvi.} ^{6.}

SERM. reacheth to the clouds; so his righteousness is like the great
LXXIII. mountains, (too high for our reason to climb,) and his

judgments, *καλλὴ ἀβυσσος*, a great abyfs, too deep for our feeble understanding to fathom; that his ways are more fubtile and fpiritual than to be traced by our dim and grofs fight. So upon contemplation of a like cafe, although, as it feems, hardly fo obfcure or unaccountable as this, the cafe concerning God's conditional rejection of that people, whom he in a fpecial manner had fo much and fo long favoured, St. Paul himfelf doth profefs. That therefore although we cannot fully refolve the difficulty, we notwithstanding without diftruff fhould adhere to thefe pofitive and plain declarations, whereby God reprefenteth

Rom. xi.
33.

2 Pet. iii. 9. himfelf ferioufly defigning and earneftly defiring, *That all men fhould come to the knowledge of the truth; that none fhould perish, but that all fhould come to repentance*; not doubting but his declared mind, and his fecret providence, although we cannot thoroughly difcern or explain their confifteny, do yet really and fully confpire. But no farther at this time.

SERMON LXXIV.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION ASSERTED AND EXPLAINED.

I TIM. iv. 10.

—*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men,
especially of those that believe.*

8. **AS** our Saviour was such to all men by his doctrine, **SERM.**
or the general discovery of all saving truth; so may he **LXXIV.**
be esteemed such in regard to his exemplary practice;
whereby upon the open stage of the world, and in the
common view of all that would attend unto him, he did re-
present a living pattern of all goodness; by imitating which,
we may certainly attain salvation. He that will consider
his practice shall find it admirably fitted for general in-
struction and imitation; calculated for all places and all
sorts of people; suited to the complexions, to the capa-
cities, to the degrees, to the callings of all men; so that
every sort of men may from it draw profitable direction,
may in it find a copy, even of his particular behaviour:
for he was a great Prince, illustrious in birth, excellent
in glory, and abounding in all wealth; yet was born
in obscurity, lived without pomp, and seemed to pos-
sess nothing; so teaching men of high rank to be so-
ber, mild, and humble; not to rest in, not to regard
much, not to hug and cling to the accommodations
and shows of worldly state; teaching those of mean de-
gree to be patient, content, and cheerful in their station.
He was exceedingly wise and knowing, without bound

SERM. or measure; yet made no ostentation of extraordinary
 LXXIV. knowledge, of sharp wit, of deep subtilty; did not vent
 high, dark, or intricate notions; had in his practice no
 reaches and windings of craft or policy; but was in his
 doctrine very plain and intelligible, in his practice very
 open and clear; so that what he commonly said or did,
 not only philosophers and statesmen, but almost the
 simplest idiots might easily comprehend; so that those
 might thence learn not to be conceited of their super-
 fluous wisdom; these not to be discouraged in their
 harmless ignorance; both having thence an equally suf-
 ficient instruction in all true righteousness, a complete
 direction in the paths to happiness, being thereby σοφίζου-
 ναι εἰς σωτηρίαν, made wise and learned to salvation. He
 did not immerse himself in the cares, nor engage himself
 into the businesses of this world; yet did not withdraw
 himself from the company and conversation of men: he
 retired often from the crowd, that he might converse
 with God and heavenly things; he put himself into it,
 that he might impart good to men, and benefit the world,
 declining no sort of society; but indifferently conversing
 with all; disputing with the doctors, and eating with the
 publicans; whence thereby both men of contemplative
 and quiet dispositions or vocations, and men of busy spirits,
 or of active lives, may be guided respectively; those not
 to be morose, supercilious, rigid, contemptuous toward
 other men; these not to be so possessed or entangled with
 the world, as not to reserve some leisure for the culture of
 their minds, not to employ some care upon the duty of
 piety and devotion; both may learn, whether in private
 retirements, or in public conversation and employment,
 especially to regard the service of God and the benefit of
 men: thus was the example of our Lord accommod-
 ated for all men; especially conducting them in the
 hardest and roughest parts of the way leading to bliss, the
 acclivities and asperities of duty; self-denial, or neglect
 of worldly glory and fleshly pleasure, patience, humility,
 general charity; shewing us the possibility of performing
 such duties, and encouraging us thereto. Through these

2 Tim. iii.
15.

difficult and dangerous passages (as a resolute chieftain of SERM. life) he undauntedly marched before us, charging, beat- LXXIV.
 ing back, and breaking through all opposite forces, all ^{Ἀρχηγὸς}
 enemies, all temptations, all obstacles; enduring painfully ^{ζών.}
 the most furious assaults of the world; boldly withstand- ^{Ἀδς. iii. 15.}
 ing and happily conquering the most malicious rage of
 hell; so that victory and salvation we shall be certain of,
 if we pursue his steps, and do not basely (out of faintness ^{1 Pet. ii. 21.}
 or falsehood) desert so good a leader; we shall not fail of
 the unfading crown, if *with patience we run the race that* ^{Heb. xii. 2.}
is set before us, looking unto the Captain and Perfecter of ^{1 Pet. v. 4.}
our faith, Jesus, who, for the joy proposed unto him, en- ^{Ἀμωρέντι-}
dured the cross, despised the shame, and hath sat down at ^{νῶν τῆς δόξης}
the right hand of the throne of God. Would it not raise ^{τίθαι.}
 and inflame any courage to see his commander to adven- ^{ζών.}
 ture so boldly upon all hazards, to endure so willingly all ^{Rev. ii. 10.}
 hardships? Whom would not the sight of such a fore- ^{Jam. i. 12.}
 runner animate and quicken in his course; who, by run- ^{Προδρομος.}
 ning in the straight way of righteousness with alacrity ^{Heb. vi. 20.}
 and constancy, hath obtained himself a most glorious
 crown, and holdeth forth another like thereto, for the
 reward of those who follow him? Now as our Lord's
 doctrine, so did his example, in the nature and design
 thereof, respect and appertain to all men, it being also
 like the light of heaven, a common spectacle, a public
 guide, *to guide our steps in the way of peace*: if it do not
 appear so, if it do not effectually direct all, it is by ac-
 cident and beside God's intention; it is by the fault of
 them who should propound it, or of them who have not
 eyes fit or worthy to behold it; briefly, what was said
 concerning the universal revelation of Christian doctrine
 may be applied to Christ's practice.

9. Jesus is *the Saviour of all men*, as having combated
 and vanquished all the enemies of man's welfare and hap-
 piness; dispossessing them of all their pretences and usur-
 pations over man, disarming them of all their power and
 force against him; enabling us to withstand and overcome
 them. Man's salvation hath many adversaries of different
 nature and kind; some directly oppugning it, some for

SERM. LXXIV. mally prejudicing it, some accidentally hindering it; some alluring, some forcing, some discouraging from it, or from the means conducing to it: the chief of them we may from the Scripture (with consent of experience) reckon to be the *devil*, with all his envy and malice, his usurpations, his delusions, and his temptations to sin; the *world*, with its snares and baits, its violences, persecutions, and menaces; the *flesh*, or natural concupiscence, with its bad inclinations and propensities to evil, its lusts and pleasures; *sin*, with its guilt, and mischievous consequences; the *law*, with its rigorous exactions, hard measure, and harsh boding; *conscience*, with its accusations and complaints, its terrors and anguishes; *divine anger*, with its effects, *death* and *hell*. ^a All these our Lord hath in several and suitable ways defeated; as to their malignity, contrariety, or enmity in respect of man's salvation; he hath, as Zachariah prophesieth in his Benedictus, *saved us from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us: so that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might (ἀποθως) safely and securely, without danger or fear, serve him, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.*

Matt. xiii. 28. The *devil*, (that enemy, that adversary, that accuser, that slanderer, that murderer, that greedy lion, that crafty serpent, the strong one, the mischievous one, the destroyer,) Dragon, Rev. xii. 3, who usurped an authority, and exercised a domination over mankind, as the prince of this world; who made prize of them, captivated them at his pleasure; who detained them under the power (or authority) of darkness and wickedness; who had the power of death; him our Saviour hath destroyed or defeated, (κατήργησεν, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh; that is, abolished him as to any farther pretence of empire or power over us;) him he hath dejected from heaven, (I saw Satan like lightning falling down from heaven;) him he hath cast out: Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the

1 Luke i. 71, 74.
Matt. xiii. 28.
Luke xi. 19.
1 Pet. v. 8.
Rev. xii. 3.
Acts x. 38.
1 John ii. 14.
Rev. xii. 9.
John xii. 31.
xiv. 30.
xvi. 11.
Ephes. ii. 2.
vi. 12.
2 Cor. iv. 4.
Coloss. i. 13.
Acts xxvi. 18.
x. 38.
2 Tim. ii. 26.
Heb. ii. 14.
Luke x. 18.
John xii. 31.
xvi. 11.

^a — ὁ Χεῖρος ὅδιν τῆς ἰδίας παύσεως προσκατὰ τῇ ἀρχῇ τῇ κέρμεν τούτου.
Athanas. contra Apoll. p. 628.

prince of this world be cast out : all his works he hath dissolved : For this cause, saith St. John, the Son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the devil. He combated this strong one, (this mighty and dreadful foe of ours,) and baffled him, and bound him, and disarmed him, (taking away πανοπλίαν αὐτοῦ, the whole armour in which he trusted,) and spoiled him, (τὰ σκεύη διήρπασε, rifled all his baggage, bare away all his instruments of mischief,) and plundered all his house ; leaving him unable (without our fault, our baseness, our negligence) to do us mischief, (as is intimated in the 12th of St. Matthew, and 11th of St. Luke ;) yea, he triumphed over all these infernal principalities and powers, and exposed them, as St. Paul saith : he imparted to his disciples ability to trample upon all his power, by him all his followers are so fortified as to conquer the wicked one, as St. John says : he affordeth light to discover all his wiles and snares, strength and courage to withstand all his assaults, to repel all his fiery darts, to put him to flight.

SERM.
LXXIV.

1 John iii. 8.
Matt. xii.
29.

Luke xi. 21,
22.

Coloss. ii.
15.

Idrymadonov,
Luke x. 19.

1 Joh. ii. 14.

Eph. vi. 11.

2 Cor. ii. 11.

Eph. vi. 16.

1 Pet. v. 9.

Eph. iv. 27.

Jam. iv. 7.

The world also (that is, the wicked principles, the bad customs, the naughty conversation and example which commonly prevail here among men ; alluring to evil and deterring from good ; the cares also, the riches, the pleasures, the glories of the world, which possess or distract the minds, satiate and cloy the desires, employ all the affections and endeavours, take up the time of men ; all in the world which fasteneth our hearts to earth, and to these low transitory things ; or which sink them down toward hell ; and which detain them from soaring toward heaven) is an enemy, an irreconcilable enemy to our salvation ; the friendship thereof being inconsistent with a friendship in us toward the God of our salvation ; or in him toward us : for the friendship of the world is enmity with God ; and, If any man love the world, the friendship of the Father is not in him. And this enemy our Lord hath vanquished, and enabled us to overcome. Be of courage, saith he, I have overcome the world : he, by a constant self-denial and temperance, defeated the bewitching pleasures and flattering glories of it ; he, by an immove-

Jam. iv. 4.

1 John ii.

15.

Be of John xvi.

33.

SERM. able patience, baffled the terrible frowns and outrageous
LXXIV. violences of it; *he*, by a resolute and invincible main-

1 John v.
4, 5.

nance of truth, in great measure routed and dissipated the errors and oppositions thereof; *he*, by a general and intense charity, surmounted the provocations, envies, and enmities thereof; *he* did it himself for us, and *he* also enabled us to do it; furnishing us with sufficient strength, and fit weapons, whereby we may combat and conquer it; may sustain and repel its force; may shun and elude its baits; for, *every one that* (by faith in him) *is born of God, doth overcome the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith: Who is he that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

Rom. viii.
38.
2 Cor. ii.
14.
Phil. i. 28.

In all these things (that is, in whatever concerns the world and its enmity; *tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword*) *we are*, saith St. Paul, *more than conquerors through him that loves us; thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ: our Lord hath procured for us hopes that will raise our minds and affections above the world; objects employing our care and endeavour far beyond it; satisfactions that will cheer our hearts, and satiate our desires without it; comforts that will support and sustain our spirits against all the terrors, all the assaults, all the evils thereof; by his means it is, that we have no reason either to love it, or to fear it, or to value it, or to be concerned about it; but to condemn it as a thing unworthy of us and below us.*

Gal. v. 24.

The *flesh* also (that is, all that within us of bodily temper, or natural constitution, which inclineth and swayeth us to vicious excess in sensual enjoyments; which disposeth us to the inordinate love of ourselves, and of other creatures; which *lusts against the spirit*, and is

1 Cor. ii. 14.
Matt. xxvi.
41.
Gal. v. 17.
Rom. vii.
18, 19.
Jam. i. 14.

adversary thereto; which blindeth and darkeneth our minds in the apprehension of our judgment concerning divine things; which perverteth and disableth (enfeebleth) our wills in the choice and prosecution of what is good; which discomposeth and disordereth the affections and passions of our soul; which continually enticeth and se-

duceth us to sin) is also an enemy; a very powerful, very SERM. treacherous, very dangerous, and very mischievous enemy LXXIV. to us and our welfare; rendering us enemies to God, (for *the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject* Rom. viii. 7. *to the law of God, neither indeed can be,*) being another ^{7.} Rom. vii. law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, ^{23.} and captivating us to the law of sin; engendering and ^{1 Pet. ii. 11.} fostering those *fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;* ^{Gal. v. 19.} whose works and fruits are all sorts of intemperance, im- ^{1 Cor. iii. 3.} purity, pride, envy, contentiousness: this capital enemy of ours our Lord did in his own person first subdue, reject- ing all the suggestions and thwarting the impulses there- of; entirely submitting to and performing the will of God; Luke xxii. even in willingly drinking that cup, which was so dis- ^{42. Matt.} tasteful, so grievous to natural will and fleshly desire. He ^{xxvi. 39.} so conquered the flesh in himself for us; he also conquers ^{John xvii. 19.} it in us, by the guidance and assistance of his grace en- ^{Heb. ii. 10.} abling us to withstand it, and to overcome it. *The law of* Rom. viii. *the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, saith St. Paul, hath freed* ^{2.} *me from the law of sin and death.* He infuses a light dis- ^{2 Cor. iv. 6.} cussing those fogs which stream from carnal sense and ap- ^{1 Cor. ii. 15.} petite; so that we may clearly discern divine truths, the ^{1 John ii. 27.} will of God, the way to happiness: he inserteth principles ^{Eph. v. 8.} of spiritual life and strength, counterpoising and overway- ^{Rom. xii. 2.} ing corporeal and sensual propensions; so that we can re- ^{1 John v. 8.} strain sensual desires, and compose irregular passions, and ^{Phil. ii. 13.} submit readily to God's will, and observe cheerfully God's law, and freely comply with the dictates of the Spirit, or of right reason; he so continually aideth, encourageth, and upholds us, that we can do all things through Christ that ^{Phil. iv. 13.} *strengtheneth us;* so that by his power and help *the flesh* ^{2 Cor. iii. 5.} *with its affections and lusts are crucified;* the earthly mem- ^{Heb. xiii. 21.} bers are mortified; the old man (which was corrupted ac- ^{Gal. v. 24.} cording to deceitful lusts) is put off; the body of sin is so de- ^{Coloss. iii. 5. ii. 11.} stroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; sin doth not ^{Eph. iv. 22.} reign in our mortal bodies, so that we (must) obey it in the ^{Rom. vi. 6,} lusts thereof; we are renewed in the spirit of our minds; ^{12. viii. 13.} and do put on the new man, which is created according to ^{Heb. xii. 1.} God in righteousness and true holiness. ^{Eph. iv. 23.} ^{ii. 10.} ^{Coloss. iii. 10.}

SER. M. LXXIV. Our *sins* also are very grievous enemies of ours, loading us with heavy guilt, stinging us with bitter remorse and anxious fear, keeping us under miserable bondage, exposing us to extreme mischief and misery; them our Lord hath also routed and vanquished: in regard to this performance was the name Jesus assigned to him; as the angel told Joseph: *She shall bear a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins*: [From their *sins*; taking in all the causes and the consequences of them; ^b from all those spiritual enemies, which draw us, or drive us into them; from the guilt and obnoxiousness to punishment, the terror and anguish of conscience, the wrath and displeasure of God following upon them, the slavery under their dominion, the final condemnation and sufferance of grievous pains for them;] the guilt of sin he particularly freed us from: for *he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood*. Christ died for sinners, (for us then being sinners,) that is, that he might deliver us from our sins, with all their causes, adjuncts, and consequences. *He bare our sins in his own body on the tree; the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin; he is the propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world; he was manifested to take away our sins; once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin* (εις ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας, *to the abolition of sin*) *by the sacrifice of himself; we are justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; by his obedience many are constituted righteous, (or free from the guilt and imputation of sin;) he justifies the ungodly; covering their sins, and not imputing them unto them*. So doth he wipe away the guilt of sin; and he voids the condemnation passed for them; for *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; who is there that can condemn, since Christ hath died, or rather hath risen again?*

He hath also appeased God's wrath for sin, and removed the effects of it, (the punishment and vengeance due to sin

^b Ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν τῷ γένει τῶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου πά-
θους πληρώσας τὴν σωτηρίαν, ἵνα ἔλυν τὸν ἄνθρωπον τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἐν-
χρίμειν πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἱλαριώσῃ. *Damasus Epist. apud Theod. v. 9.*

and threatened for it :) so that *being enemies, we were re-* SERM.
conciled to God by the death of his Son ; being justified by LXXIV.
faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Rom. v. 10,
Christ : Jesus is the ὁ σωτηρ, who delivers us from the 1.
wrath to come ; being justified by his blood, we shall be saved 1 Thess. i.
by him from wrath. 10.
 Rom. v. 9.

The strength and dominion of sin he hath also broken, by the grace afforded us, whereby we are able to resist and avoid it : so that *sin henceforth shall not domineer over* Rom. vi.
us, or reign in our mortal body : Being freed from sin, we 14, 12, 18,
are enslaved to righteousness, and made servants to God. 22, 6.
The body of sin is destroyed, so that we no longer serve sin.
 Whence consequently he hath subdued, utterly weakened, or quite destroyed (as to any force or mischievous influence upon us) those other adversaries, which depend upon sin, and by its power oppose and afflict us.

Our *conscience* is such an enemy accusing us, condemning us, vexing us with the memory and sense of sin ; suggesting to us the depth of our guilt, and the danger of our state, terrifying us with the expectation of punishment and vengeance : but our Lord (by securing us of mercy and favour upon repentance and sincere obedience) hath silenced and stilled this adversary ; hath *by his blood*, as the Heb. ix. 14.
 Apostle to the Hebrews says, *purged our conscience from dead works ; hath delivered them, who through fear of* Heb. ii. 15.
death were all their life-time subject to bondage ; so that
thence we obtain a steady peace of mind, a joyful satisfaction in the service of God, a comfortable hope of future
bliss : peace, comfort, and joy are the adjuncts of that Rom. xv.
state he shall put us into, and the fruits of that Spirit he 13. xiv. 17.
 bestoweth on us. Gal. v. 22.

The *Law* also (in its rigour, as requiring exact obedience, and as denouncing vengeance to them who in any point violate it) is, by reason of our weakness and inability so perfectly to observe it, an enemy to us ; justifying no man, perfecting no man, causing, increasing, aggravating, quickning, declaring sin ; *yielding occasion to sin of killing* Gal. ii. 16.
us, working wrath, ministering death and condemnation, iii. 11.
subjecting us to a curse, as St. Paul teacheth us : but our Heb. vii. 19.
 Rom. x. 5.
 viii. 3.
 Gal. iii. 12.
 v. 3.
 Rom. vii. 18.
 iv. 15. iii.
 20. v. 20.
 vii. 7, 8, 10,
 11.
 1 Cor. xv. 56

SERM. LXXIV. Lord, by mitigating and abating the extreme rigour thereof, by procuring an acceptance of sincere (though

2 Cor. iii.
7; 9.

Gal. iii. 13.

Rom. iii.

21, 28. iv.

6. vii. 6, 4.

vi. 14.

Gal. v. 13.

hath redeemed us from the curse of the law; hath justified and imputed righteousness to us without the works of the law, (without such punctual performances as the law exacts:) we are delivered from the law, (as to those effects of it; the condemning, discouraging, enslaving us,) we cease to be under the law, (in those respects,) being under grace, being led by the Spirit, as St. Paul tells us. The Law indeed is still our rule, our guide, our governor; we are obliged to follow and obey it; but it ceases to be a tyrant over us, a tormentor of us.

1 Cor. xv.
26.

Death is also an enemy, (*The last enemy*, saith St. Paul, *which shall be destroyed, is death*;) the enemy, which naturally we most fear and abominate; that which would utterly destroy us.

Acts ii. 24.

1 Cor. xv.

20.

Acts xxvi.

23.

Col. i. 13.

Rev. i. 5.

Acts iii. 15.

Ἀρχὴν τοῦ

ζωῆς.

2 Tim. i.

10.

Heb. ii. 14.

Rom. vi.

28.

This enemy our Lord hath vanquished and destroyed: by his death and resurrection he opened the way to a happy immortality; he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel: He by his death defeated him that had the power of death; and delivered them, who by fear of death were through their whole life subject to bondage; he pulled out sin, which is the sting of death, and reversed the sentence of condemnation, to which we all stood obnoxious. *The wages of sin* (that which we had deserved, and was by law due to us for it) *was death; but the gift of God is everlasting life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Lastly, *Hell*, (that is, *utter darkness*, extreme discomfort, intolerable and endless misery,) the most dismal of all enemies, our Lord hath, by the virtue of his merits, and the power of his grace, put us into a capacity of avoiding; He hath, as St. Paul before told us, *delivered us from the wrath to come. O Hell, where is thy victory? Death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire.*

1 Thess. i.

10.

1 Cor. xv.

55.

Rev. xx.

14.

Thus hath our Lord in our behalf vanquished and defeated every thing that is opposite or prejudicial to our salvation and welfare. Many indeed of these things do in a more immediate, more peculiar, and more signal manner concern the faithful members of the Christian Church, and are directly applied to them; yet all of them in some sort, according to God's design, and in respect to a remote capacity, may be referred to *all men*. They are benefits which God intended for *all men*, and which *all men* (if they be not faulty and wanting to themselves) may obtain. How they more especially appertain to the faithful, we may shew afterward.

SERM.
LXXIV.

APPLICATION.

1. Hence ariseth great matter and cause of glorifying God; both from the thing itself and its extent; for the magnitude of beneficence is to be estimated, not only according to the degree of quality, but according to its amplitude of object: to redeem any doth signify goodness, to redeem many doth increase it, to redeem all doth advance it to the highest pitch; the more are obliged, the greater is the glory due to the benefactor.

Hence the earth being full of the goodness of the Lord, the Lord being gracious unto all, and his mercy being over all his works, all creatures partaking of God's bounty, is so often insisted upon in those divine hymns, as a ground of praise to God.

Some do indeed speak of glorifying God for his discriminating grace, as if grace the narrower it were the better it were: but is not selfishness and envy at the bottom of this? Is not this the disposition of those in the Gospel, who murmured—*is thine eye evil because mine is good?*

It is dangerous to restrain God's benevolence and beneficence within bounds narrower than they really are; thereby diminishing his glory.

2. Hereby is discovered the general obligation of men to love God; to praise him, to serve him in tokens of his goodness, in regard to his beneficence, out of gratitude

SERM. toward him. If God hath been so kindly affected toward
LXXIV. men, and so careful of their welfare, as for procuring and promoting their salvation to provide a Saviour for them, to design his own beloved Son to that performance, in prosecution thereof depreſſing him into ſo low a ſtate; expoſing him to ſuch inconveniences and indignities, ſuch croſſes and afflictions, how much are then all men obliged to love him, as their gracious friend and benefactor; to praiſe and celebrate him for his favour and mercy, to render all bleſſings and thanks unto him? This certainly is the duty of all, if the redemption in God's deſign reach to all; otherwiſe in reality it lieth on few, in practice it could ſcarce touch any. They cannot be obliged to thank God for their redemption, who are not obliged to him for the thing itſelf; they cannot heartily reſent the kindneſs, who are not aſſured that it extends to them: and to ſuch aſſurance (according to the doctrine of particular redemption) it is certain that very few men, eſpecially of the beſt men, can arrive; it is a queſtion whether any men arrive thereto.

Rev. v. 9.
 Eph. i. 6.
 Col. i. 12.

According to the ſenſe of all men, it is alſo no eaſy thing to know certainly, whether a man at preſent be in the ſtate of grace: and he that doth not know that, cannot (except upon the ſcore of general redemption) be aſſured that he is redeemed; and therefore cannot thank God.

It hath been the common doctrine of Chriſtendom for fifteen hundred years together, that no man (without a ſpecial revelation) can in this life be aſſured of his perfeverance, and conſequently not of his ſalvation; and conſequently not of his election or redemption, in caſe only they who are ſaved are in the deſign of God redeemed: no man therefore, without that ſpecial revelation, can thank God heartily for his redemption, as being uncertain thereof, it being a ſecret reſerved in God's breaſt.

It is yet a farther difficulty, ſuppoſing a man to have a good aſſurance of his preſent ſtate, to be aſſured of his final perfeverance in it: which he that hath not, cannot (except upon the ſaid ſcore) thank God for it.

The best men especially, who, out of modesty and humility, are apt to doubt of their present state; who studying their hearts, and discovering many imperfections in themselves; who reflecting on their lives, and observing in them many defects, are apt to question whether they are qualified for God's favour, or fitted for the future account and enjoyment of heaven; who considering the treachery of their hearts, the feebleness of their reason, that unsteadiness of their resolution, will be apt to fear they may fall away, will be rendered hence incapable to give God thanks for their redemption: only the bold and blind bayards (who usually out of self-conceit are so exceedingly confident of their election and salvation) will be able to praise God for it.

SERM.
LXXIV.

Hence the assurance of salvation happening to few, and of them to much fewer upon good grounds; it being necessary to none, it being perhaps (yet far more probably, according to the general sense of Christendom) groundless to any; few or none are capable to render God praise and thanks for it: so shall he lose in effect all thanks for the greatest benefit he did ever confer on mankind.

It is therefore a dangerous opinion, which checketh their gratitude, which stoppeth their mouths from praising God, which so depriveth God of his due praise. It is much more safe to praise God for the benefits we conceive we have, but have not, than to neglect to praise him for that we have.

3. This doctrine doth afford great matter of comfort. If a man reflecting on his own heart and ways (observing in them many blemishes and defects) is apt to be discouraged, yet it will raise him to consider, that he is not thereby excluded from a possibility of salvation, seeing he is assured of God's favourable inclination, and who hath expressed so much good-will and favour toward him in his redemption; seeing he is persuaded, that he hath a Saviour so kindly and pitifully affected toward him; who watcheth him well; who is concerned in his salvation, that he might not be crossed or defeated in his designs, that he might not lose the effects of his endeavours, the price of

SERM. his blood. But he that seeth himself in so doubtful a condition, as to his own qualifications, and withal hath no assurance that God was ever graciously disposed toward him, cannot but thereby be much discouraged.

LXXIV.

This doctrine therefore is safe and useful; it can do no man harm; it may do him great good, by giving him hopes of being assisted and accepted by his Redeemer. But the other is dangerous, as tending to discourage and deject men.

4. This doctrine is a great incitement to the performance of duty; both as working upon men's ingenuity, and disposing them in gratitude to serve God, from the resentment of their obligation for so great a favour; and as assuring them of acceptance in case of endeavour to obey. How can he but be moved willingly to serve God, who hath an apprehension of God's such merciful design to save him? of his having done so much in order thereto?

But how can he be moved to serve God in consideration of such a benefit, who is ignorant of its being intended him? How can any man apply himself cheerfully to serve that master, whose favourable inclination toward him, whose readiness to accept his service, he doubteth of?

1 Cor. vi.

20.

The Apostles propound it as a ground of gratitude, and an obligation to the performance of duty, that they are redeemed by Christ; which supposeth they do all know and believe it.

1 Pet. i. 17.

Supposing Christ is not the Redeemer of all, but of those only who shall be finally saved, these grounds of thankfulness and enforcements of duty cannot properly or pertinently respect all Christians, and indeed only those who are sure of their salvation.

My thanking Christ for his redeeming me, my diligently serving him as my Redeemer, supposeth my opinion, and is grounded upon the truth of his being really so:—I cannot heartily, confidently, or comfortably do it, except I know it, and am assured thereof; which I cannot do, except Christ died for all men, or that I am assured of my particular election.

So that either Christ is an universal Saviour, or the

greatest part of Christians are disobliged and incapacitated SERM.
reasonably to thank him, to praise him, to serve him, as LXXIV.
they are enjoined to do.

5. It is a great aggravation of infidelity, of apostasy, of all disobedience, that we are guilty of them, do frustrate the designs and undertakings of Christ, do reject the overtures of his grace, do abuse the goodness and mercy of their Redeemer; it consequently deterreth from those things.

The Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God Luke vii.
toward them; (God therefore designed their good.) 30.

How shall we escape that neglect so great salvation? A Heb. ii. 3.
salvation which they were capable of, which was designed for them, which was offered to them; otherwise there would have been no danger in neglecting it, no fault in doing it.

It is said of the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, that *they* Acts xiii.
did ἀνωγειναι, thrust away the Gospel, (the word of salva- 26, 46.
tion, that was sent them,) judging themselves unworthy of eternal life: God did think fit out of goodness seriously to offer it to them, but they did not think fit to embrace it.

Despisest thou the riches of God's goodness? How can 2 Pet. iii. 9.
any man despise that which doth not concern him, which Rom. ii. 4.
never was offered him, which at least he hath no ground of confidence, that it extendeth to him?

These things I speak that ye may be saved: so our Lord John v. 34,
saith to those—who did not believe in him. 38.

How often have I willed, &c.

Matt. xxiii.

Denying the Lord that bought them.

37.

2 Pet. ii. 1.

6. It is a great encouragement and excitement to devotion. Who can be backward of having recourse to his Redeemer; or of using his mediation? Whom will not such an experiment of goodness invite and encourage?

But the contrary apprehension must needs damp devotion, and discourage from it. He can apply himself to God but faintly and distrustfully, who distrusteth whether he hath any Redeemer or Mediator, or no; who must thus conceive and say to himself: Perhaps God hath loved me, and perhaps he never had nor will have any regard to my

SERM. welfare. Perhaps Christ died with intention to do me
LXXIV. good; perhaps he never did mean any such thing. Perhaps those expressions of kindness sounding so generally do not include me; perhaps I am excluded, and only de-
 luded by them. When a man cannot say to Christ, O my Saviour!—O my Mediator! &c. nor use his intercession with God for the procurement of faith, of grace, of any good thing.

7. It is a ground and motive of charity; there arising thence a more considerable relation between all men; being all the objects of Christ's love and mercy should endear men to one another; it rendereth every man valuable in our eyes, as dear and precious in God's sight. It should make his salvation desirable to us.

Pray for all men, saith St. Paul.

The contrary opinion removeth this ground of charity; and so cooleth it.

8. It should consequently render us careful to promote the salvation of others, and fearful to hinder it by ill example, by ill doctrine, by any misbehaviour. So doth St. Paul argue, when he saith, *Destroyest thou him for whom Christ died?*

9. It is a piece of justice to acknowledge the right and interest of every man in his Saviour.

A wrong to exclude any; to confine and appropriate this great blessing; to engross, to inclose a common; to restrain that by forging distinctions, which is so unlimitedly expressed.

The undertakings and performances of our Saviour did respect all men, as the common works of nature do; as the air we breathe in, as the sun which shineth on us; the which are not given to any man particularly, but to all generally; not as a proper inclosure, but as a common—they are indeed mine, but not otherwise than as they do belong to all men.

A gift they are to all equally, though they do not prove to all a blessing; there being no common gift, which by the refusal, neglect, or ill use of it may not prove a curse—a *favour of death*.

SERMON LXXV.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY.

LUKE ii. 10.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not : for, behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people ^a.

THE proper business of a festival is spiritual joy, conceived in our hearts by reflection on some notable blessing conferred on us ; accompanied with a grateful sense and expression, answerable to the special bounty and mercy of God, in due proportion to the nature and degree of that blessing. SERM. LXXV.

Such joy is a duty, or a part of religious devotion, required by God, and very acceptable to him : for as God would have his servants perpetually content, well satisfied, and cheerful in all states, and upon all occurrences ; so he doth especially demand from us, that we should entertain his favours with delight and complacency ; it being proper, it being seemly, it being just, so to do : for since joy is a natural result of our obtaining whatever we do apprehend good, or esteem and affect ; the conception of it is a plain argument, that we do well understand, do rightly prize, do cordially like, do thankfully embrace God's favours ; as, on the contrary, a defect of it doth imply, that

¹ Theff. v.
¹⁶.
Rom. xii.
¹².
Phil. iv. 4.

^a Ἰδὲ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζονται ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην, ἥτις ἵσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ.

SERM. we do not mind them, or take them to be little worth,
 LXXV. that we do not sensibly relish them, or accept them kindly.

And if ever we are obliged, if ever we are concerned so to rejoice, then surely it is now; when the fairest occasion and highest cause of joy that ever was is presented to us; when certain news from heaven, and the best that ever came from thence, of the most admirable, the most glorious, the most beneficial event, that ever happened in the world, is in a manner suitably rare conveyed to us; for, *Behold*, saith the angel, *I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

Upon which words (each whereof is emphatical, and pregnant with matter observable) we shall first make a brief descant, or paraphrase, supplying the room of a curious analysis; then we shall urge the main duty couched in them.

Ἰδὲ, Behold: This is a word denoting *admiration*, exciting *attention*, intimating *assurance*: *Behold*, and *admire*; it is no mean, no ordinary matter, that I report, but a most remarkable, a very marvellous event: *Behold*, and *attend*; it is a business not to be passed over with small regard, but most worthy your consideration, of high moment and concernment to you. *Behold* and *see*; it is no uncertain, no obscure thing; but that whereof you may be fully assured, as if it were most evident to your sense, and which by conspicuous proofs shall be demonstrated; in the mean while you have no slight authority for it: for

Εὐαγγελίζομαι, I bring good tidings; I, an angel, a special messenger of God purposely sent on this errand, that by the strangeness of my apparition I may excite you to regard it, by the weight of my testimony I may incline you to believe it, by the dignity of my nature I may declare the importance of it; I, a faithful servant of God, and a kind friend to men, very willing at his command to perform good offices to them, do bring a message well becoming an angel's mouth, worth my descent from heaven, and putting on this visible shape: for *I bring*

Εὐαγγελίζομαι χαρὰν μεγάλην, good tidings of great joy: I bring *tidings* that may gratify the curiosity of any man,

the mind of man naturally being greedy of news: good *tidings*; those are welcome to all men, and apt to yield more pleasure than any knowledge we had before: *tidings of joy*; such as may not only minister a dry satisfaction to your reason, but sensibly touch your affections, by the comfortable nature and beneficial tendency of them: *tidings of great joy*; as not touching any indifferent or petty business, but affairs of nearest concernment and highest consequence to you: (such, indeed, as you shall understand, which do concern not the poor interests of this world, not the sorry pleasures of sense, not any slender advantage of your present life and temporal state; but your spiritual welfare, your everlasting condition, the future joy and happiness of your souls;) *tidings*, indeed, the most gladsome that ever sounded upon earth, that ever entered into mortal ear: these *I bring*

Τῶν, to you: to you shepherds; persons of mean condition and simple capacity, leading this innocent and humble sort of life, employed in your honest vocation, undergoing toilsome labour and sore hardship; witness the open field, witness the cold season, witness the dark night, in which I find you watching and guarding your sheep; *to you, who could expect no very welcome tidings*; who are little concerned in any great transactions, and can have small ambition or hope of bettering your condition by any changes here; even to you (not in the first place to the mighty *princes*, to the crafty *statesmen*, to the sage *philosophers*, or learned *rabbies*, to the wealthy *merchants*, or fine *citizens*, who now are warm in their houses, enjoying their ease and pleasure; reposing on their beds, or sitting by their fires, or revelling at their banquets and sports; but to you) poor, harmless, silly, industrious souls, who well may represent the greater and better part of mankind; in this surprising and absolutely free way the gracious Lord of heaven by me his special minister doth vouchsafe to send from thence *tidings of great joy*: which shall be

Παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, to all people; or rather to all the people; that is, to God's ancient and peculiar people, in regard to which it is said, *I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the*

Matt. xv. 24. x. 6.
Rom. ix. 4.
Luké xxiv. 47. Acts xiii. 46. Isa. ii. 3. Zech. ix. 9. Rom. ix. 4.

SERM. house of Israel; to that people, I say, especially, primarily, and more immediately this joy did appertain; it, by
LXXV.

a closer relation to God, and special interest in his promises, having plainest title thereto; it, from anticipations of knowledge, faith, and hope, being more capable to admit such an overture; it indeed being the representative of all the spiritual Israel, or faithful seed of Abraham, for whom the benefits which these tidings import were designed; to it first indeed, but mediately and consequentially to all people dispersed on the face of the earth. The expression seemeth adapted to the present conceits of that nation, which apprehended nothing about God's favourable intentions to the community of men: but in effect it is to be understood extensively in reference to all people: for the Saviour, the Christ, the Lord, of whom this good news did report, was not only to be the Redeemer and Governor of that small people, but of the world, of every nation, of all mankind: here indeed we

- Luke ii. 31. have παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all the people*; but in the *nunc dimittis* of old Simeon, we have πάντων τῶν λαῶν, *of all the peoples*: Mine eyes, said he, have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all the peoples; As he
- Luke ii. 32. was the glory of his people Israel; as in him God did visit
 i. 68.
 Acts xiii. 47. and redeem that his people; so he was made a light to
 Isa. xlix. 6. lighten the Gentiles, and to be for salvation to the uttermost
 xlii. 6.
 Luke ii. 38. ends of the earth: he was the expectation of Israel; but he
 Hag. ii. 7. was likewise the desire of all nations: he was destined to
 Psal. ii. 8.
 Mic. v. 2. rule in Sion; but the Heathen also were given for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his
- Isa. xi. 10. possession: he was the root of Jesse, which should stand for an ensign of the people, to which the Gentiles should seek; he was that royal Person, of whom the Psalmist did sing,
 Psal. lxxii. Men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him
 17. blessed.

He was to be born by nation a Jew, but a man by nature; the Son of man was a style which he commonly did own and affect, no less than the Son of Abraham, or of

- Gal. iv. 4. David; he was born indeed under the law, but of a woman;
 Heb. ii. 14. and therefore brother to us all, as partaker of the same

flesh and blood: hence was he endued with an human SERM. compassion, and with a fraternal affection toward all men; LXXV. hence was he disposed to extend the benefit of his charitable and gracious performances unto them all.

Judea therefore must not ingross this angelical Gospel; it is of importance most universal and unlimited, reaching through all successions of time, and all extensions of place; filling all ages and all regions of the world with matter and with obligation of joy: hence even by Moses anciently (according to St. Paul's interpretation) were all nations upon this account invited to a common joy; *Rejoice*, said Rom. xv. he, *O ye nations with his people*. Hence, in foresight of^{10.} Deut. xxxii. this event, the holy Psalmist (as the Fathers expound^{43.} him c) did sing, *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of isles be glad thereof*: hence, *Sing, O thou*^{1. xcvi. 1.} Psal. xcvi. 1. *barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child*—*The*^{1sa. liv. 1.} Isa. liv. 1. *wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose*—*Sing unto the Lord a*^{1sa. xxxv. 1.} Isa. xxxv. 1. *new song, and his praise from the end of the earth*, said the evangelical Prophet in regard to this dispensation; in fine, this angel himself did interpret his own words, when in concert with the heavenly choir he sang that anthem, *Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good-*^{Luke ii. 14.} Luke ii. 14. *will toward men*: whence we may collect that a peace diffused over the earth, and a good-will extended toward all men, were implied in these tidings of great joy to all people.

We then are all concerned in these tidings, and we may look on them as by this heavenly Evangelist imparted to us; whence our duty must be to listen with reverent attention unto them, seriously to weigh the purport of them, diligently to contemplate the reasons of that great joy, which effectually should be produced in us by them, as their proper and due result; to further which practice, let us take some prospect of this Gospel, whereby it may ap-

^c Τὴν προτίειν τῷ σωτήρι ἐκφάνειαν πολλήν. Theodor.

¹⁰ Totum ad Christum revocemus, si volumus iter rectæ intelligentiæ tenere. Aug. in. Pf. xcvi. 7.

SERM. pear pleasant, and apt to kindle a sprightly joy in our
LXXV. hearts. The matter of it is the nativity of our ever blessed Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus; for, *To you, saith our angel, is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;* an occurrence fraught with all the greatest causes of joy imaginable; as importing innumerable, unexpressibly and unconceivably vast advantages thence springing to us.

It doth minister occasion of rejoicing for all the blessings, which did flow from each of his salutary undertakings and performances; for all the mercies purchased by the merits of his obedience, and by the price of his blood; for all the graces issuing from his dispensation of the Holy Spirit; for all the benefits consequent on his illustrious resurrection, ascension, and glorification; as being a good entrance to them, yea, a great progress in them, and a certain pledge of their full accomplishment: for all the work of our redemption was in a manner achieved, when our Saviour did appear; his incarnation was the great step toward it, as being an act of the humblest obedience, and of the highest merit, that could anywise be performed, for satisfying the justice of God, and winning his favour toward us. His *taking up life* may well seem more meritorious than his *laying it down*, and the chief passion which he could ever undergo; his death was a passion, great as death could be; his life also was a continual passion, or exercise of huge patience: but his birth seemeth to be the greatest and strangest passion of all; involving the lowest submission and the deepest suffering. What nobler sacrifice could there be, than God's offering himself up to mortality, to infirmity, to slavery? What obedience can be thought of comparable to that which he

Heb. x. 7. did express, when he said, *Lo, I come to do thy will, O*
 John vi. 38. *God: I came down, not that I might do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.* For him to descend from heaven, the region of light and bliss, into this gloomy and sad world; for him in a manner to divest himself of celestial majesty, and to assume the form of a servant; for him to be inclosed in a womb, and to come out wailing thence, to suck at a breast for life, to be carried in arms,

And laid in a manger, to enter on a stage of being so very **SERM.**
low and homely; for him, I say, *the Lord of glory*, thus **LXXV.**
to empty and abase himself^d; may not this reasonably be **Phil. ii. 7,**
deemed more than, after his becoming man, to sustain all^e.
the grievances incident to our nature and state? Whence
the very assumption of flesh was, saith St. Athanasius, *the*
redemption of all mankind^e. He was at least thence en-
gaged in the way of acting and suffering whatever was
needful for our recovery; and having gone so far, as-
suredly he never would flinch or recoil, but would go
through with all; being come, he would shew himself
come to purpose, leaving no part unfinished of his grand
design.

So that as they, who celebrate the birth of a prince, do
mean thereby to express their joy for all the good, which
they do hopefully presume to enjoy from his protection
and conduct afterward in all his life; and as they, who
welcome the sun-rising, do imply their satisfaction in the
conveniences of his light through the whole ensuing day;
so may the nativity of our Lord afford matter of rejoicing
for all the train of mighty blessings which do succeed it.
We may therefore now well consider him born to instruct
us by his excellent doctrine, and to guide us by his per-
fect example; born to merit God's mercy and favour to-
ward us, by an entire submission to God's pleasure in the
whole conduct of his life, and in the final resignation of
it; born to renew and sanctify our nature, to support and
strengthen us in obedience to God's commandments, to
succour us in temptations, to comfort us in distresses by
his grace; born to rear himself from the grave for con-
firming our faith, and ensuring our hopes of salvation;
born to ascend up above all the heavens to God's right
hand, there effectually to intercede for us, thence libe-

^d 'Εαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν, ἑαυτὸν ὑπατάσας.

^e 'Η-αὐτοῦ ἐκείνης τῆς παραδόξου ἰστορίας ἡν ὡς οὐκ ἐκείνης τῆς ἀποστολῆς. *Ath. Or.*
S. c. Arr. p. 385. vid. p. 618.

Δύχων ἡψι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ εὐχην, &c. *Greg. Naz. Or. 38.*

Creatoris ad creaturam descensio credentium est ad æterna provectio. *Leo*
M. de Nat. Serm. 3.

SERM. rally to dispense all heavenly blessings to us; Well may
LXXV. we now rejoice, as seeing him come to disclose the way
 of happiness, to establish the covenant of grace, to void all
 the obstructions, and subdue all the enemies to our wel-
 fare: well may we celebrate this birth, as by its virtue
 blessing the Patriarchs, enlightening the Prophets, inspir-
 ing the Martyrs with faith and courage, enduing all the
 Saints, that ever have been, with grace, and crowning
 them with glory; so that in this day we have the passion,
 the *pasch*, the ascension, the pentecost, the memorials of
 every saint suggested to us^f; the joys of all our festivals
 do conspire or commence in this; which is the head and
 spring, which is the fruitful seed, which is the hopeful
 morning of them all. Πάντα ταῦτα τῆς παρουσίας ἡμέρας χάρις

Greg. Nyss.
 tom. ii. p.
 784.

ἔστιν αὐτῇ γὰρ ἤρξε τῶν ἐφεξῆς ἀγαθῶν. *All these things, saith
 St. Gregory Nyssen, are the grace of this present day, for
 it began the goods which did in order succeed.*

But waving the numberless benefits so consequent on the
 nativity, we shall only touch some of those which have a
 more formal and close relation thereto.

I pass over the contemplation of that sweet harmony
 between the old and the new world; in which, to our
 comfortable satisfaction, the sweetest attributes of God
 (his goodness, his wisdom, his fidelity and constancy)
 do illustrate themselves, by completion of the ancient pro-
 mises, prefigurations, and predictions touching this event.

I forbear also to reflect on the happy alteration and
 amendment of the world, which our Lord's coming did
 induce, by comparing the state of things before it, with
 that which followed it; the consideration of which case is
 very pleasant, and productive of joy. First then,

I. Let us consider, that the nativity doth import the
 completion of many ancient promises, predictions, and
 prefigurations concerning it; that whereas all former dis-
 pensations of favour and mercy were as preludes or pre-
 ambles to this; the old Law did aim to represent it in

^f Οὐκ αὖ καὶ τὰ τοῦ Πάσχα καλὰ τῶν περὶ τῆς γένεως εὐφημιῶν μέγας ἐστ. Greg.
 Nyss.

its mysterious pomps; the chief of providential occurrences did intimate it; the Prophets often in their mystical raptures did allude to it, and often in clear terms did express it; the gracious designs of God, and the longing expectations of mankind being so variously implied in regard thereto; now all is come to be fulfilled, and perfected in most clear, most effectual, most substantial accomplishment; now is sprung up that *seed of the woman*, which, according to the first Gospel preached to Adam, should *bruise the serpent's head*; now is the mystical Isaac, the miraculous *Son of promise*, born; now is that grant to Abraham, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*, made good; now is *Shiloh come*, of whom Jacob foreboded, *unto him the gatherings of the people shall be*; now is that oracle of Moses more than verified, *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like to me; him shall ye hear*; now *the Star is come out of Jacob*, the vision whereof dazzled Balaam, and stopped him from cursing that people, in which it should arise; now is that oath discharged to David, *Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne*; now those illustrious predictions of Isaiah, *There shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse—A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son; to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be on his shoulders—There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn ungodliness from Jacob*, are fully accomplished; now *the righteous Branch*, of which Jeremiah and Zechariah spake, is sprouted forth; and Ezekiel's *One Shepherd*, Daniel's *Son of man*, coming with the clouds of heaven; Micah's *Ruler in Israel*, whose goings forth have been from old; Haggai's *Desire of all nations*; Malachi's *Angel of the covenant*, and *Son of righteousness*, have all in truth appeared: now is that glorious *King and Captain* arrived, whom the holy Oracles do so magnificently describe; whom Moses

Gen. iii. 15.

Gen. xxii.

Gal. iii. 8,

Gen. xlix.

Deut. xviii.

Acts iii. 22.

Num. xxiv.

Pf. cxxxii.

Luke i. 33.

Isa. xi. 1.

vii. 14. ix.

6. lix. 20.

Rom. xi.

Jer. xxiii. 5.

xxxiii. 15.

Zecl. iii. 8.

vi. 12.

Ezek.

xxxiv. 23.

xxxvii. 24.

Dan. vii. 13.

Mic. v. 9.

Matt. ii. 6.

Hag. ii. 7.

Mal. iii. 1.

iv. 2.

§ Sapientia et benignitas Dei ac salutiferi operis mora capaciores nos suæ vocationis effecit, ut quod multis signis, multis vocibus, multisque mysteriis per tot fuerat secula pronuntiatur, in his diebus Evangelii non esset ambiguum, &c. *Leo P. de Nat. Serm. 3.*

SERM. LXXV. and Joshua, whom David and Solomon in so many pat-
 circumstances did foreshadow; whom God would *set upon*
his holy hill of Zion; the sceptre of whose kingdom is a
mighty sceptre; who should raise the tabernacle of David
that is fallen; before whom all kings should fall down, and
whom all nations should serve; who should reign over the
house of Jacob for ever, and of whose kingdom there shall be
no end.

Psal. ii. 6.
 xlv. 6.
 lxxii. 11.
 Acts xv. 16.
 Am. ix. 11.
 Luke i. 33.
 Dan. vii. 13.
 Mic. iv. 7.
 Aug. in Ps.
 xcvi.

Now what can be more delightful, or satisfactory to our mind, than to reflect on this sweet harmony of things, this goodly correspondence between the old and new world; wherein so pregnant evidences of God's chief attributes, (of his goodness, of his wisdom, of his fidelity and constancy,) all conspiring to our benefit, do shine? Is it not pleasant to contemplate how provident God hath ever been for our welfare? what trains from the world's beginning, or ever since our unhappy fall, he hath been laying to repair and restore us? how wisely he hath ordered all dispensations with a convenient reference and tendency to this masterpiece of grace^b? how steady he hath been in prosecuting his designs, and how faithful in accomplishing his promises concerning it?

Joh. viii. 56. If the *holy patriarchs did see this day, and were glad; if*
 'Εγγαλλή- a glimpse thereof did cause their hearts to leap within
 σαιτο. them; if its very dawn had on the spirits of the prophets
 so vigorous an influence^c, what comfort and complacency
 should we feel in this its real presence, and bright aspect
 on us! How sensibly should we be affected with this our
 happy advantage above them; the which our Lord him-
 self then did teach us to estimate duly, when he said,
 Matt. xiii. 16. 17. *Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they*
hear: for verily I say unto you, that many prophets and
righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see,
and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye
hear, and have not heard them.

^b Non itaque novo consilio Deus rebus humanis, nec fera miseratione consuluit, sed a constitutione mundi unam eandemque omnibus causam salutis instituit. Léo P. de Nat. Serm. 3.

^c Magnam enim jucunditatem tunc carpebant ipsi sancti Prophete, cum ea videbant in spiritu, non jam impleta, sed adhuc futura. Aug. in Ps. xcvi.

2. Let us consider what alteration our Lord's coming SERM. LXXV. did induce, by comparing the state of things before it to Eph. ii. 14. that which followed it. The old world then consisting of Acts x. 28. two parts, severed by a strong wall of partition, made up of difference in opinion, in practice, in affection, together with a strict prohibition to one of holding intercourse with the other.

Of one, and that far the greater part, St. Paul hath given us these descriptions and characters: *They were* Eph. ii. 12. *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant, having no hope, and being without God in the world; they were by nature the children of wrath and of* Eph. ii. 8. *disobedience; they were dead in trespasses and sins, walking* ii. 1, 2. *according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience; they did walk in the vanity of their* Eph. iv. 17, *mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated* 18, 19. *from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart; and being past feeling, did give themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness; they had their con-* Eph. ii. 8. *versation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; being foolish, disobedient, deceived,* Tit. iii. 3. *serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy,* Col. iii. 7. *hateful, and hating one another.* (Eph. v. 8. Such was the case, the Col. ii. 13. *dismally wretched case, of the Gentile world; such were* 1 Cor. vi. 11. *our forefathers, (such after them of course, by fatal con-* 2 Cor. iv. 4. *sequence, should we have been;) they were in their minds* 1 Theff. iv. 5. *blinded with gross ignorance, and deluded with foul* 1 Pet. iv. 3. *errors; they were in their wills and affections corrupted* Gal. iv. 8. *with great disorder, perverseness, sensuality, malice; they* Rom. i. 29-31. *did in their conversation practice all sorts of impiety, iniquity, and impurity; their conceptions of God were very unworthy, and their worship answerably such; (full of sottish, savage, beastly superstitions;) their principles were vain, and their life conformably dissolute; in short, they lived under the domination and influence of wicked spi-* Eph. vi. 12. *rits, who thence are styled lords and princes of this world,* ii. 2. *of this air, of this secular darkness; even of the wisest* (John xii. 31. xiv. 30. xvi. 11. 2 Cor. iv. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 16. Col. i. 23. ii. 15. Acts xxi. 10.

SERM. LXXV. among them, (the number of whom, notwithstanding the clatter their writings made, was very small and inconsiderable,) of those who by the conduct of natural light strove to disengage themselves from vulgar mistakes and miscarriages, the case was little better; for even their minds (after all their studious disquisitions and debates) proved dark and giddy; full of ignorance, of error, of doubt in regard to the main points of religion and of morality; some of them flatly denying the existence, or (which in effect is the same) the providence of God; the natural distinction between good and evil, the spiritual nature and future subsistence of our souls, the dispensation of rewards and punishments after this life; others wavering in doubt, or having but faint persuasions about these matters; few or none having clear notions, or steady opinions about any such things; whence their practice, in correspondence to their rules, must needs have been very loose, or very lame; so that well might our Apostle say of them, *They became vain in their reasonings, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves wise, they became fools; and as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.*

Διαλογισ-
μοίς.
Rom. i. 21
—28.

As for the other part, or little parcel of men, the condition of that was also very low: if the rest of the world did lie in dark night, they did live but in a dusky twilight; their religion was much wrapt up in shadow and mystery; they had but dilute ideas of God's nature, and scant discoveries of his will; their law or rule of practice in divers respects was defective and infirm; they were locked under the discipline of childish rudiments, suiting their raw capacities, and under the bondage of slavish yokes, besitting their stubborn dispositions; which defaultances in notion their practice commonly did outstrip; being fond, corrupt, hypocritical, void of interior, substantial, and genuine righteousness; as the old Prophets did often complain, and as our Lord, with his Apostles, did urge.

Col. ii. 17.
Heb. viii.
3, 7, 1.

Rom. viii. 3.
Gal. iii. 21.
Heb. vii.
18, 19.

Such was the state of the world in its parts; and jointly of the whole it may be said, that it was *shut up under sin*

Gal. iii. 22.
Rom. xi. 32.
iii. 9, 19.

and guilt, under darkness and weakness, under death and corruption, under sorrow and woe: that no full declaration of God's pleasure, no clear overture of mercy, no express grant of spiritual aid, no certain redemption from the filth or the force of sin, from the stroke of death, from due punishment hereafter; no encouragements suitable to high devotion, or strict virtue, were anywise in a solemn way exhibited or dispensed before our Lord's appearance: so that well might all men be then represented as Cimmerians, *sitting in darkness, in the region and shadow of death*; well may we suppose all ages foregoing to have teemed with hope and desire of this happy day; or that, as St. Paul saith, *the whole creation* (that is, all mankind) *groaneth together, and travaileth together until now*; as labouring with pangs of implicit desire, or under a painful sense of needing a Saviour; well might Isaiah thus proclaim his coming; *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee: for, behold, darkness shall cover the land, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising: for, now, the Lord hath made known his salvation, his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth do see the salvation of our God.*

SERM.
LXXV.

Isa. ix. 1.
Matt. iv. 16.

Rom. viii.
22.

Isa. lx. 1,
2, 3.

Psal. xcvi.
2, 3.

Now we are all children of the light, and of the day; *1 Thess. v.* all do know God from the least to the greatest; the rarest, *5.* the deepest notions are grown common and obvious; *(2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 6.)* every child is instructed in the highest truths, every peasant is become a great philosopher, (beyond Aristotle, or Plato, or Epictetus,) skilful of the best knowledge, able to direct his life in the best way, capable of obtaining the best good.

Now the Spirit of God (the Spirit of direction, of succour, of comfort spiritual) is poured upon all flesh. *Now the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men*; fully instructing them in their duty, and strongly enabling them to perform it, freely offering them mercy,

Acts ii. 17.
Joel ii. 28.
Tit. ii. 11.
Luke xxiv.
47.

SERM. mightily encouraging them with hopes of most blessed
LXXV. rewards.

Eph. iii. 6. Now Jew and Gentile are reunited and compacted in
ii. 15. one body; walking in the same light, and under obligation to the same laws; sharing in a common redemption and inheritance; being inseparably linked together with the bands of faith, of charity, of spiritual fraternity; thus
2 Cor. v. 17. *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*, in virtue and consequence of our Lord's appearance:
Δις Σωτη. in contemplation of which so great, so general, so happy
Heb. ix. 10. a change, how can we forbear to rejoice?

But farther, that we may yet more nearly touch the point,

3. Let us consider that the nativity of our Lord is a grand instance, a pregnant evidence, a rich earnest of Almighty God's very great affection and benignity toward mankind; for, *In this*, saith St. John, *the love of God was manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world*: and, *Through the tender mercies of our God*, sang old Zechariah, *the dayspring from on high did visit us*: this indeed is the peculiar experiment, wherein that most divine attribute did shew and signalize itself. The power of God doth brightly shine in the creation, the wisdom of God may clearly be discerned in the government of things; but the incarnation of God is that work, is that dispensation of grace, wherein the divine goodness doth most conspicuously display itself. How indeed possibly could God have demonstrated a greater excess of kindness toward us, than by thus, for our sake and good, sending his dearest Son out of his bosom into this fordid and servile state, subjecting him to all the infirmities of our frail nature, exposing him to the worst inconveniences
Psal. xxxvi. of our low condition^k? What expressions can signify,
6. cviii. 4.

^k Apparuerat ante potentia in rerum creatione, apparebat sapientia in earum gubernatione; sed benignitas misericordiae nunc maxime apparuit in humanitate. *Bern. de Nat. Serm. 1.*

Semper quidem diversis modis, multisque mensuris humano generi bonitas divina consuluit, et plurima providentiae suae munera omnibus retro seculis clementer impertit; sed in novissimis temporibus omnem abundan-

what comparisons can set out the stupendous vastness of **SERM.**
this kindness? If we should imagine, that a great prince **LXXV.**
should put his only son (a son most lovely, and worthily
most beloved) into rags, should dismiss him from his
court, should yield him up into the hardest slavery, merely
to the intent that he thereby might redeem from capti-
vity the meanest and basest of his subjects, how faint a
resemblance would be of that immense goodness, of that
incomparable mercy, which in this instance the King of all
the world hath declared toward us his poor vassals, his in-
deed unworthy rebels!

And what greater reason of joy can there be, than such
an assurance of his love, on whose love all our good de-
pendeth, in whose love all our felicity consisteth? What
can be more delightful than to view the face of our Al-
mighty Lord so graciously smiling upon us?

Should we not be extremely glad, should we not be
proud, if our earthly prince by any signal mark would
express himself kindly affected to us? How much more
should we resent such a testimony of God's favour! how
worthily may our souls be transported with a sense of such
affection!

4. We may consider our Lord's nativity, as not only
expressing simple good-will, but implying a perfect recon-
ciliation, a firm peace, a steady friendship established be-
tween God and us; or that it did not only proceed from
love, but did also produce love to us. We did stand at
a great distance, in estrangement, yea in enmity toward
God; our first parents had by presumptuous disobedience
revolted from him; and we, insisting on the footsteps of
their apostasy, continued in defiance of him; *All men* Rom iii.
had sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God—There 23. ix. 23.
was not a righteous man upon earth, that did good, and Gal. iii. 22.
sinned not: whence unavoidably the wrath of the most Ecclef. vii.
holy God was incensed, the justice of the most righteous 20.
Lord was engaged against us; thence did issue a sad Leo de Nat. Sermon. 2.

tiam solitæ benignitatis exceffit; quando in Christo ipsa ad peccatores mis-
ericordia, ipsa ad errantes veritas, ipsa ad mortuos vita descendit, &c. *P. Leo*
M. de Nat. Sermon. 4.

SERM. doom, thence a just sentence of capital punishment was
LXXV. denounced on us ; no pretence of favour, no overture of

peace, no hope of redress did then appear ; we nowise being able to expunge our guilt, to repair our offences, to recover out of that corruption in mind and will, which did seal us up to ruin, indisposing us either to find or to entertain mercy : but our Lord's coming did appease that anger, did mollify that justice, did suspend that condem-

Eph. ii. 15, nation, did close the breach, and *slay the enmity* ; God,

16. as the Apostle speaketh, *sending his Son in the likeness of*

Rom. viii. 3. *sinful flesh, and for sin did condemn sin in the flesh* : for, how

can God now avert his face from us, whom his only dear Son hath vouchsafed to make and own for his brethren ?

How can he look with an eye of displeasure on that nature, wherewith that Son of his love standeth clothed be-

(1 Pet. i. 19. fore him ? How can he abide offended with our race, in
Heb. vii. which pure innocence and perfect obedience are found^m ;

John xiv. he now appearing with us, and for us, in whom not the

30.—*ἐν ἡμῶν* strictest justice nor the shrewdest malice can descry any

John xix. 6. fault or blemish ; *in whom therefore God is thoroughly*

—*ὃς ἑστὶν* well pleased ? Since we have *Emanuel, God with us—*

nos in autem *God manifested in our flesh—The Lord our righteousness,*

Matt. iii. 17. partaker of our infirmity, intercessor and advocate for his

1 Tim. iii. own flesh and blood, ready to do and suffer whatever God

Jer. xxiii. 6. pleaseth to require on our behalf, how can God be against

xxxiii. 16. us ? Shall God and man persist at distance or disaffection,

who are so closely related, who are indeed so intimately united in one person ? Shall heaven and earth retain en-

mity, which have so kindly embraced and kissed each

Psal. lxxxv. other ; since *truth hath sprouted from the earth, and right-*

11.

¹ Ἀδύνατον γίγναι τῇ φύσει λογικῇ αὔξη, καὶ ἰουσιῶς ἀμαρτησάσθαι, καὶ ἐνὸς κα-
ταδίκην θανάτου γνωμίνῃ, ταυτὴν ἀνακαλίσσασθαι εἰς ἰλιθοθρίαν. *Ath. p. 638.*

Ἀδύνατον ἰστίως τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ ἀναμάρτητον ἰπ' ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως παραδι-
δῆναι, εἰ μὴ θιὸς ἐν σαρκὶ πιστεύοιτο εἶναι, ὃ τὴν ἀναμάρτητον δικαιοσύνην εἰς κόσμον
εἰσάγαγον, &c. *Ath. de Incarn. Verbi.*

^m Τὸ τοῦ Ἀδὰμ σύμπωμα εἰς ἀσύγκριτον ἀνάστημα Χριστὸς ἀνστήσας, ἐν ἡμῶν
ώματι σαρκὸς ἀμαρτίας ὀφθεῖς, καὶ κατακρίνας τὴν ἀμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί. *Ath.*
p. 620.

Εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐν τῇ ἀμαρτησάσθαι φύσει ἡ ἀναμάρτησις ἄφθνη, πῶς κατακρίθῃ ἡ ἀμαρτία
ἐν τῇ σαρκί ; *Id. p. 368.*

confess hath looked down from heaven? Shall the war go on, when the great Mediator and Umpire of peace is come; *preaching peace to them that are afar off, and to them that are near?* Can death any longer reign over us, or our disgrace and misery continue, now that *the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, the Captain of salvation* doth appear for our relief?

SERM.
LXXV.

Isa. ix. 6.
Acts x. 36.
Eph. ii. 17.
1 Cor. ii. 8.

Now then what can be more worthy of joy, than such a blessed turn of affairs? How can we otherwise than with exceeding gladness solemnize such a peace? a peace accorded with him, who in forces so infinitely doth overmatch us; who at his pleasure can utterly quell us; who with the greatest ease, with less than a word of his mouth, can dash us to nothing, or hurl us down into an abyss of remediless woe: how can we avoid being extremely satisfied at the recovery of his favour and friendship, which alone can be the foundation of our safety and welfare, which is the sole fountain of all good, of all comfort, of all felicity?

5. Our Lord's nativity doth infer a great honour, and a high preferment to us: nowise indeed could mankind be so dignified, or our nature so advanced as hereby: no wisdom can devise a way beyond this, whereby God should honour his most special favourites, or promote them to a nearness unto himself. For hence we become allied to God in a most strait affinity, his eternal Son being made our brother: hence as touching the blood-royal of heaven we do in dignity o'ertop all the creation; so that what the Psalmist uttered concerning man is verified in the most comprehensive sense; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet*: for now the Son of man, being also the Son of God, is the head of all principality and power, is the Lord of all things, is the sovereign prince of all the world, is placed far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. This is a peculiar honour, to which the highest angels cannot pretend; for he took not the nature of angels, but he took the seed of

Eph. iii. 10.
19.

(Ἡμεῖς
κατὰ
συνῆμα, ἡμῶν
κατὰ
σῶμα. Ath.
p. 612.)

Psal. viii. 5.
6.
Heb. ii. 7,
8.

Col. ii. 10.
Eph. ii. 22.
Acts x. 36.
Eph. i. 21.
Phil. ii. 9.
1 Pet. iii.
22.

Heb. ii. 16.

- SERM. LXXV.** *Abraham*; whence those noble creatures are become in a manner inferior to poor us; and, according to just obligation, willingly do adore our nature; for, *when God brought his first begotten Son into the world, he said, Let all the angels of God worship him.* Is not indeed our flesh become adorable, as the true Shechinah, as the everlasting palace of the supreme Majesty, *wherein the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily*; as the most holy shrine of the Divinity; as the orb of *inaccessible light*; as more than all this, if more could be expressed, or if we could expound that text, *the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us*? May not our soul worthily claim highest respect, all whose faculties (being endued with unmeasurable participations of the Holy Spirit) have been tuned to a perfect harmony with the all-wise understanding and the most pure will of God? yea, which hath been admitted into the nearest consortship, into the strictest union with the eternal Word; hath become an ingredient of him, who is *the wisdom and the power of God*? It was a great dignity that man should be made according to the image of God; but it is a more sublime glory, that God should be made after the image of man, κατὰ τὰντα ὁμοιωθεὶς, *being made like to us in all things*, bating only sin, which is no part of us, but an unnatural excrescence, or a deflection from our nature^a: how could we be so raised up to God, as by his thus stooping down to us? What can be imagined more honourable to us, than that God should deem us worthy of such condescension? This, this indeed is our exaltation, that God for us should express not only so vast charity, but so prodigious humility.

And is it not good matter of joy to be thus highly graced^b? When are men better pleased than when they are preferred; than especially, when from the meanest

^a Qui cum origini humanæ multum dederit, quod nos ad imaginem suam fecit, reparationi nostræ longe amplius tribuit, cum servili formæ ipse se Dominus coaptavit. *Leo de Nat. Serm. 4.*

^b Exultent ergo in laudem Dei corda credentium, et mirabilia ejus confitentur filii hominum, quoniam in hoc præcipue Dei opere humilitas nostra cognoscit, quanti eam suus conditor æstimavit. *Leo Serm. 4.*

state, from the dunghill, or from the dust, they are raised **SERM.**
to be set among princes, and made to inherit the throne of **LXXV.**
glory? Wherefore this being our case, that we sons of **Psal. cxvii.**
earth, children of corruption, and brethren of worms, (in ^{7, 8.}
Job's style;) we exiles of paradise, we heirs of death and ^{1 Sam. ii. 8.}
misery; we, that by our nature are the lowest of all intel-
ligent creatures, that by our merits were debased *beneath* **Psal. xlix.**
the beasts that perish, that we are assumed to such rela- ^{12.}
tions, that we are ennobled to such a pitch, that our na-
ture hath mounted so high above all creatures, with what
enlargement of heart should we entertain a dispensation so
wonderful! how welcome should that day be which doth
introduce it!

6. Finally, if we survey all principal causes of joy and
special exultation, we shall find them all concurring in
this event.

Is a messenger of good news embraced with joy? Be-
hold the great Evangelist is come, with his mouth full of
news, most admirable, most acceptable: he, who doth
acquaint us, that God is well pleased, that man is re-
stored, that *the adversary is cast down*, that paradise is set **Rev. xii. 10.**
open, and immortality retrieved; that truth and right- **John xiv.**
eousness, peace and joy, salvation and happiness are de- ^{30.}
scended, and come to dwell on earth; he of whom the
Prophet told, *How beautiful upon the mountains are the* **Isa. lli. 7.**
feet of him that bringeth good tidings; that publisheth **Nah. i. 15.**
peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth **Rom. x. 15.**
salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth; he
who doth himself thus declare the drift and purport of
his message; *The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, to* **Isa. lxi. 1;**
preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to ^{2.}
bind up the brokenhearted; to proclaim liberty to the cap- **Luke iv. 18,**
tives, and opening of the prison to them that are bound; to ^{19.}
proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all
that mourn.

Is the birth of a prince by honest subjects to be com-

† Hic infirmitatis nostræ suscipiens conditionem, propter quos ad inferna
descendit, eodē in cœlestibus collocavit. *Leo de Nat. 3.*

SERM. LXXV. our understanding, to correct the stupidity of our hearts, the perverseness of our wills, the disorder of our affections, to mitigate our anguish of conscience, and cleanse our
 (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) fores of guilt; by various efficacious medicines, by the
 (Eph. ii. 10.) wholesome instructions of his doctrine, by the powerful inspirations of his grace, by the refreshing comforts of his Spirit, by the salutary virtue of his merits and sufferings.

Is mirth seasonable on the day of marriage? Behold the greatest wedding that ever was is this day solemnized; heaven and earth are contracted; divinity is espoused to humanity; a sacred, an indissoluble knot is tied between
 Joel ii. 16. God and man; *The Bridegroom is come forth out of his chamber, (verbum Dei de utero virginali,) clad in his nuptial garment of flesh, and ready to wed the Church, his*
 Mat. xix. 7. beloved spouse^r; *Let us therefore, be glad and rejoice; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

Is the access of a good friend to be received with cheerful gratulation? Behold the dearest and best Friend of all mankind (most able, most willing, most ready to perform all good offices, to impart wholesome advice, needful aid, sweet converse, and seasonable consolation) is arrived to visit us, to sojourn with us, to dwell in us for ever.

Is opportune relief grateful to persons in a forlorn condition, pinched with extreme want, or plunged in any hard distress? Behold a merciful, a bountiful, a mighty Saviour and succourer, undertaking to comfort all that mourn, inviting all such to receive from him a plentiful supply for their needs, a comfortable ease in their pressures, a happy riddance from their calamities; who crieth aloud, *If any*
 (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) *one thirsteth, let him come to me and drink; Come to me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Is the sun-rising comfortable, after a tedious, darksome, and cold night? See, *the Sun of righteousness is risen with*

^r In natali Domini quasi in nuptiis spiritualibus sponsæ suæ Ecclesiæ Christus adjunctus est—tunc processit sponsus de thalamo suo, hoc est, verbum Dei de utero virginali. *Aug. de temp. Serm. 2.*

^r Ἡ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ αὐτῇ. *Procl. in Eph. p. 1.*

hedling in his wings, dispensing all about his pleasant rays SERM. LXXV.
 and kindly influences: *The day-spring from on high hath* LXXV.
visited us; diffusing an universal light upon the souls of men, Luke i. 78.
 whereby the night of ignorance is dispelled, the spectres
 of error are vanished, the mists of doubt are scattered;
 whereby we clearly and assuredly discern all truths of im-
 portance to us, and worthy of our knowledge; concerning
 the nature and attributes, the works and providence, the
 will and pleasure of God; concerning ourselves, our na-
 ture and original, our duty and interest, our future state,
 and final doom: *Our light is come, and the glory of the* Ista. 1x. 1.
Lord is risen upon us; *the light of the world, the true light,* John. viij.
enlightening every man, by whose lustre *all flesh may see* 12. ix. 5.
the salvation of God, and which guideth our feet in the way i. 9.
of peace, doth visibly shine forth upon us. Luke iii. 6.

Never indeed did heaven with so fair and serene a coun-
 tenance smile upon earth, as then it did, when this (*ἀστὴρ* Rev. xxii. 16.
λαμπρὸς καὶ ὁρσινὸς,) *bright and morning star* did spring up
 above our horizon, bringing this goodly day; and with it
 shedding life and cheer among us.

From this auspicious day did commence the revocation
 of that fatal curse, by which we were expelled from para-
 dise, adjudged to death, and committed to hell; from
 thence we became reinstated in a condition of hope, and
 in a fair capacity of happiness; from thence is to be dated
 a return of joy into this region of disconsolateness. In
 this nativity mankind was born, or did revive from mani-
 fold deaths; from a legal, a moral, a natural, an eternal
 death; from lying dead in irreparable guilt, and under an
 insuperable power of sin; from having our bodies irreco-
 verably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed
 into that *second* more ghastly death of perpetual incurable
 anguish.

* It is in effect therefore the birthday of the world; the

* It is the birthday of the Church. *Generatio enim Christi origo est populi Christiani, et natalis capitis natalis est corporis.* *P. Leo de Nat. Serm. 6.*

Sicut cum Christo in passione crucifixi, in resurrectione resuscitati, in ascensione ad dextram Patris collocati, ita cum ipso sumus in hac nativitate congeniti. *Ibid.*

SERM. beginning of a new, better, eternal life to men, (offered to
LXXV. all, and effectually bestowed on those who will embrace
 it,) which we now do celebrate. All reason therefore
 we have to rejoice most heartily and most abundantly: as
 the goods thence accruing to us are in multitude innume-
 rable, in quality inestimable, in duration immense; so in
 some correspondence should our joy be very intense, very
 effuse, very stable; the contemplation of them should in-
 fuse somewhat of that *unspeakable joy*, whereof St. Peter
 speaketh; we should *be filled*, according to St. Paul's
 expression, *with all joy and peace in believing* them; we
 should *hold fast*, as the Apostle to the Hebrews adviseth,
the confidence and rejoicing of hope, grounded on them,
firm to the end.

κατὰ ἐν-
 πλελίαν.
 1 Pet. i. 8.
 Rom. xv.
 13.
 Phil. i. 25.
 Heb. iii. 6.
 Rom. xii.
 12.

Having so many, so great causes of joy, are we not very
 stupid, are we not strangely cross and perverse, if we neg-
 lect so pleasant a duty?

To conclude: Of all the days that rise upon us, this
 undoubtedly is the queen, crowned by God's own hand
 with sovereign blessings; God hath avowed it to be the
 day of his peculiar making, and therefore of our special
 rejoicing; for thus of old the inspired Psalmist did teach

Psal. cxviii. and exhort us to keep Christmas: *This is the day which*
the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein.
 Matt. xxi.
 9. 42. 1 Pet. ii. 7. Acts iv. 11.

S E R M O N LXXVI.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST FORETOLD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

ACTS iii. 18.

But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

MANY good arguments there are, different in kind, **SERM.** which conspire to persuade the truth of our religion; **LXXVI.** such as are the intrinsic reasonableness, excellency, and perfection of its doctrine; the miraculous works performed in attestation thereto; the special favour of Providence declared in the support and propagation thereof: but upon no other ground do the Scriptures so much build its truth, and our obligation to embrace it, as upon the exact correspondence and conformity thereof to all the ancient Scriptures, which did foreshew or foretell its revelation and introduction into the world; to those especially which described the personal characters, circumstances, and performances of our Lord: to this our Lord, in his discourses and disputes with incredulous people, referred them; *Search the Scriptures*, said he, *because in them ye expect to* John v. 39. *have eternal life*; (that is, to find the true way of saving truth leading thereto;) *and those are they which testify of me*: by this he instructed and convinced his Disciples; *beginning from Moses and from all the Prophets, he expounded* Luke xxiv. 27. xxii. 37. i. 70, *unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning him-*

SERM. self: and, *These* (said he to them presently before his departure) *are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me:* this the Apostles, in all their preaching, (whereby they taught, proved, and persuaded the Christian doctrine,) did chiefly insist upon; *Moses, saith St. Peter, truly said unto the Fathers, yea, and all the Prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days;* and, *To him, saith he again, give all the Prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* And of St. Paul it is said, that he mightily convinced the Jews—*shewing by the Scriptures, that Jesus was the Christ;* and—he expounded, and testified the kingdom of God, *persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets:* thus the chief Apostles and founders of our religion in their public discourses; and in their Epistles they observe the same method; as particularly asserting Christian doctrines and duties by the testimonies of prophetic Scriptures, so generally affirming our religion to be chiefly grounded on them; *of which salvation* (saith St. Peter, concerning the salvation exhibited by the Gospel) *the Prophets did inquire, and search diligently, who prophesied of the grace to come unto you;* and (in regard to the conviction of others) he seems to prefer the attestation of this kind before the special revelation immediately made to the Apostles; for having spoken of it, he subjoins, *καὶ ἔχουσιν βεβαίωτον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον* **2 Pet. i. 19.** *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well, that ye do take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.* And St. Paul saith, that the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, was then made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations, to the obedience of faith; and, *The holy Writings, he telleth Timothy, were able to make him wise to the salvation, which is, by the faith of Jesus Christ;* that

is, they were able to shew and persuade to him the truth of Christianity, which promiseth salvation to all that heartily embrace it and observe its laws. SERM.
LXXVI.

Such a stress was laid upon this probation by the founders of our religion; and no wonder; for that it is not only extremely forcible in itself, but hath some particular uses, and some peculiar advantages beyond others. The foreknowledge of future contingent events, (such as were many of those concerning our Saviour, depending upon the freest acts of human will,) as it is for the manner of attaining it most incomprehensible to us, so it is most proper to God, and by all men so acknowledged; future contingencies being secrets which no man, no angel, no creature can dive into, they being not discernible in their causes, which are indeterminate; nor in themselves, who are finite. The prediction therefore of such events could not otherwise than proceed from his pleasure; neither could he yield it in way of favour and approbation to that which was not perfectly true and good: this way therefore doth absolutely confirm the truth and goodness of Christian doctrine; it withal manifests the great worth and weight thereof, as implying the particular regard and care God had of it, designing it so anciently, laying trains of providence toward it, and preparing such evidences for the confirmation thereof; it together into the bargain maintaineth the truth of the Jewish dispensation, the sincerity of the ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, and the vigilant care the divine goodness hath always had over the state of religion, and toward the welfare of mankind; never leaving it destitute of some immediate revelations from himself. It had a peculiar aptitude to convert the Jews, who were possessed with a full persuasion concerning the veracity and sanctity of their ancient Prophets; and could not therefore doubt, concerning the truth of that, which appeared conformable to that which they had foretold should be declared and dispensed for their benefit. This probation also hath this advantage, that it singly taken doth suffice to convince; whereas others can hardly do it otherwise than in conjunction with one another, and

SERM. especially with its aid: for the goodness of the doctrine
LXXXVI. may be contested in some points; and however good it
 seem, it may be imputed to human invention: strange
 effects may be deemed producible by other causes beside
 divine power; and they may be suffered to be done for
 other ends than for confirmation of truth; they are also
 commonly transient, and thence most liable to doubt.
 Providence also is in many cases so mysterious and un-
 searchable, that the incredulous will never allow any infer-
 ences to be drawn from it: but the plain correspondence
 of events to the standing records of ancient prophecies
 (obvious and conspicuous to every one that will consult
 and compare them) concerning a person to be sent by
 God, who should have such circumstances, and be so qual-
 ified, who should in God's name preach such doctrines
 and perform such works, is a proof, which alone may as-
 sure any man, that such a person doth come from God,
 and is in what he declareth or doeth approved by him:
 no counterfeiting can here find place; no evasion can be
 devised from the force of this proof.

This way therefore of discourse our Lord and his Apo-
 stles (whose business it was by the most proper and effec-
 tual methods to subdue the reasons of men to the *obedi-
 ence of faith* and entertainment of Christian truth) did es-
 pecially use; as generally in respect to all things concern-
 ing our Lord, so particularly in regard to his passion; de-
 claring it to happen punctually according to what had
 been foreseen by God, and thence foreshewed by his Pro-
 phets, rightly understood; *He took the twelve, saith St.*
Luke xviii. *Luke of our Lord, and said unto them, Behold, we go up*
31, 32, 33. *to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the Pro-*
phets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished: for
he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked,
and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they shall
scourge him, and put him to death. And again, after his
Luke xxiv. *resurrection, he thus reproves his Disciples; O fools, and*
25, 26, 46. *slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken:*
Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter
into his glory? They did not then (partly being blinded

with prejudice, partly not having used due industry, and SERM. perhaps not excelling in natural capacity, however not yet LXXXVI. being sufficiently enlightened by divine grace) apprehend, or discern, that, according to the prophetic instructions, our Lord was so to suffer; but afterward, when he had *opened their understanding, that they might understand the* Luke xxiv. 45. *Scriptures*, they did see, and specially urge this point: then St. Peter declared, that *the Spirit of Christ, which* 1 Pet. i. 11. *was in the Prophets, did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow*; then it was their manner to reason (as is said of St. Paul) *out of the Scrip-* Acts xvii. 2, 3. xxvi. 22, 23. *tures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered: saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer; delivering first of all, that Christ died for our sins,* 1 Cor. xv. 3. *according to the Scriptures*: this is that which in my text St. Peter doth insist upon, affirming about the passion of Christ, that it not only had been predicted by one, or more, but foretold by an universal consent of all the Prophets; to illustrate and confirm which assertion of his, is the scope of our present discourse: to perform which, after having briefly touched the state of the matter in hand, we shall apply ourselves.

That the Messias was to come in an humble and homely manner; (without appearance of worldly splendor or grandeur;) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness; that he was to cause offences, and find oppositions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be hated and scorned, to be disgracefully and harshly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted; yea, that at last he was to be prosecuted, condemned, and executed as a malefactor, is a truth indeed, which the Jews (although they firmly believed and earnestly expected the coming of a Messias) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits; yea, inconsistent with the nature and drift of their religion, as they did understand it; for their religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not

SERM.
LXXVI.

penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity, and prosperity, as things most highly valuable; did propound them as very proper, if not as the sole rewards of piety and obedience; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard: they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction, and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell: they particularly are said to have conceived, that to be rich was a needful qualification for a prophet; (no less needful, than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good conversation and life :) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem*, the Spirit of God doth not rest upon a poor man; (that is, no special communications of grace, or of wisdom and goodness, are by God ever afforded to persons of a low and afflicted condition;) being a maxim, which they had framed, and which currently passed among them: that he therefore, who was designed to be so notable a prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore should be so highly favoured by God, that he should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd; that could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had farther (in congruity to these prejudices, abetted by that extreme self-love and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that nation,) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the Messiah was to come in a great visible state and power; to achieve deeds of mighty prowess and renown; to bring the nations of the world into subjection under him; and so to reign among them in huge majesty and prosperity. When Jesus therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications, and performances, to the prophetic characters of the Messiah) did first appear such as he did, with some pretences, or intimations rather, that he was the Messiah, their stomach presently rose at it; they were exceedingly scandalized at him; they deemed him not only a madman (one possessed or distracted) and

Matt. xvi.
20.

Matt. xiii.
57. xxvi. 65.

an imposter, but a blasphemer; for no less than blasphemy SERM. they took it to be for so mean and pitiful a wretch (as to LXXVI. their eyes he seemed) to assume unto himself so high a dignity, and so near a relation unto God, as being the Messiah did import. We even see the Disciples themselves of our Lord so deeply imbued with this national prejudice, that, even after they had avowed him for the Christ, they could scarce with patience hear him foretelling what grievous things should befall him: St. Peter himself, upon that occasion, even just after he seriously had confessed him to be the Christ, *did*, as it is expressed, *take him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from* Matt. xvi. 22. xvii. 2. John xvi. 12. *then, Lord: yea, presently after that our Lord most plainly* had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of a kingdom, and of being *grandees* Matt. xx. 21, 25. therein: yea, farther, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them; for even then they demanded of him, whether he would *at that time* Acts i. 6. *restore the kingdom unto Israel*; meaning such an external visible kingdom.

Hence of all things, notifying the Messiah, this seemeth to be the only particular, which in general the Jews did not, or would not, see and acknowledge; and this caused them to oversee all other glorious marks, how clearly forever shining in and about the person of Jesus: this cloud hindered them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being duly affected with the wonderfulness of his works, from minding, or from crediting all the testimonies from heaven ministered unto him; this, as St. Paul telleth us, *was the main scandal*, which obstructed their embracing the Gospel. As it was their ignorance or error in this point, 1 Cor. i. 20. Acts xiii. 27. iii. 17. John xv. 21. which disposed them to persecute our Lord; (*nisi enim ignorassus nihil pati posset*, as Tertullian saith; *if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, Tert. in Marc. iii. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 8. saith St. Paul;) so it was that which maintained their obstinate hatred of his name and memory; although graced with so illustrious testimonies of divine power and providence.

SERM. LXXVI. We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars con-

Vid. Tert.
ibid.

Isa. vi. 9.

Matt. xiii.

13,

Ezek. xii. 2.

Acts xxviii.

26.

Isa. liii. 1.

cerning our Lord, allege the general consent of God's people in expounding the Prophets according to our sense, this being one of those points, in respect to which the Prophets themselves did foresee and foretel their perverse stupidity and incredulity; that *they should look, and not see; hear, and not understand*; yielding herein special occasion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* Yet notwithstanding their affected and culpable blindness, there is no particular concerning the Messias in the ancient Scriptures, either more frequently in way of mystical insinuation and adumbration glanced at, or more clearly in direct and plain language expressed; or which also by reasonable deduction thence may be more strongly inferred than this.

I. I say, first, it is frequently glanced at by mystical insinuations; for explaining the intent of which assertion, we shall premise somewhat, which may serve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the ancient Scripture in the New Testament; the which, together with others connected with them, or bearing just analogy to them, we also, being assured of their design by the authority of our Lord and his Apostles, may safely presume after them to apply to the same purposes.

We may then consider, that the all-wise God, (who *worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and to whom all things are present,*) having *before eternal times*, as St. Paul speaketh, determined in due time to send the Messias, for accomplishing the greatest design that ever was to be managed in this world, (that which should bring the highest glory to himself, and procure the richest benefits to the principal of his creatures here,) did by his incomprehensible providence so order things, that all the special dispensations preceding it should have a fit tendency and an advantageous reference thereto; so that, when it came upon the stage, it might appear that the main of the plot consisted therein; and that whatever was acted before had principally a respect thereto. As therefore from the beginning of things God did in a gra-

Eph. i. 11.

2 Tim. i. 9.

Tit. i. 2.

1 Cor. ii. 7.

Eph. i. 3.

iii. 9.

Rom. xvi.

25.

Col. i. 26.

dual method make real preparations towards it, by several steps imparting discoveries of his mind about it, or in order thereto, (somewhat to Adam himself, more to Abraham and the Patriarchs, somewhat farther to Moses, much more yet to divers of the Prophets, among his chosen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered divers kinds of instruction conformable to it, and conducive to the promoting and entertainment thereof,) so he did also take especial care by many apposite representations, (*νοητὰ θεωρήματα*, *intelligible spectacles*, or objects of mental speculation, Eusebius calleth them,) handsomely inserted into all his dispensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his meaning about it; that so it might at length shew itself with more solemnity, and less surprise: the most eminent persons therefore, whom he raised up, and employed in his affairs, tending to that end, as they did resemble the Messias, in being instruments of God's particular grace and providence, (being indeed inferior Christs and Mediators, partial Saviours and Redeemers of his people, as they are sometimes called;) so they were ordered in several circumstances of their persons, in divers actions they performed, in the principal accidents befalling them, to represent him: (becoming *εἰκονιστοὶ Χριστοῦ*, *Christs in image*, as Eusebius again styleth them:) the rites also and services of religion instituted by them in God's name were adapted to the same purpose; they and all things about them, by God's especial direction and wise care, being fitted so as to be congruous emblems and shadows prefiguring Christ, and whatever appertained to him: thus was Adam, as St. Paul calleth him, *a type of Christ*; and Abel, Melchisedec, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Zorobabel are intimated to have been such; the most signal things done by them, or befalling them, having been suited to answer somewhat remarkable concerning him; so that we may say of them all, as the Apostle to the Hebrews did of the Jewish priests, *they served to the subindication and shadowing of heavenly things*. In David particularly this relation is so plain, that because thereof, in the prophets

SERM.
LXXVI.

Euseb. Hist.
i. 3.

Psal. cv. 15.
Isa. xlv. 1.
Heb. viii. 6.
Gal. iii. 19.
Neh. ix. 27.
Acts vii. 35.

Euseb. Hist.
i. 14.

Heb. viii. 5.
Exod. xxv.
40.

Rom. v. 14.
Vid. Euseb.
ibid.

Heb. viii. 5.
ὅτι οὗτοι ὁμο-
τύποιματι καὶ
σκιὰ λατρεύ-
ουσι τῶν ἰσχυ-
ριῶν.

SERM. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea, the Messias is called by
LXXVI. his name; as if he were revived in the Messias. It in-

Jer. xxx. 9. deed well suited the dignity of this great personage, and
Hos. iii. 5. the importance of his business, that he should have ap-
Ezek. pointed so notable heralds and harbingers to go before his
xxxiv. 23. face; furnished with conspicuous ensigns and badges de-
24. xxxvii. noting their relation to him. It was proper, that God
24, 25. (Heb. viii. 5. should appear to have had always an express regard to-
x. i. ix. 23. ward him: it consequently doth serve to our edification;
Gal. iv. 24. Col. ii. 17.)

for that we duly comparing things, and espying this admirable correspondency, may be instructed thereby, and established in our faith; may be excited to the admiration of God's wisdom, so harmoniously connecting things, and of his goodness, so provident for our welfare; may also be induced thereby the more highly to adore the Messias, and to esteem his design: such uses St. Paul signifieth, when having compared divers things concerning Moses to things concerning Christ, he saith, *All these things hap-*

1 Cor. x.
11, 6.

1 Pet. i. 12. *pened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.*

It is also (both for illustration and proof of these things) to be observed, that because those eminent servants of God were representatives of Christ, many things are spoken of them, as such; many things are ascribed to them, which only, or chiefly, were intended of him; their names are used as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it seemed to divine wisdom not so convenient in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all men. That this observation is true; that, I say, under the names of persons representing Christ (or of things, we may add, adumbrating his things) many things are intimated: principally concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and, to things also) which do not agree to them; many things were promised which appear never accomplished, except after an improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wideness of interpretation; such as do not well seem to suit the nature of true histories

and serious promises : thus, for instance, many things are **SERM.**
foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous state **LXXVI.**
of the Jewish Church ; which history and experience do **Isa. xiv. 9.**
testify never (according to strictness of literal acception,
yea not in any tolerable degree, near the height of what
the words import) to have come to pass : thus also, as
the Apostle to the Hebrews argueth, effects are attri- **Heb. x. 4.**
buted to the Jewish rites and sacrifices, which according
to the nature of things cannot belong to them, otherwise
than as substitutes and shadows of things more high in
substance and efficacy : thus also what is with solemn **Psal. xlv.**
oath promised to Solomon (concerning the vast extent **lxxii.**
and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace, **lxxxiii. &c.**
and prosperity ; together with his mighty acts, and suc-
cessful achievements) doth not appear directly in any
competent measure to have been accomplished : thus also
David (as St. Peter in the 2d of the Acts observeth, and **Acts ii. 29.**
groundeth his argumentation on it) speaketh divers things
of himself, which cannot be conceived properly and lite-
rally agreeable to him : such things therefore (having
some truth under them) are reasonably supposed to be
intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future more
perfect state of things under the Messias ; to concern him
(who was to be *the end of the law*) and his dispensation, **Rom. x. 4.**
which was to be the accomplishment of all things pre- **Luko xxii.**
dicted and presignified : this is that which St. Austin sig- **37.**
nifieth, when he saith of Christ, that *Him all the promises*
of the Jewish nation, all their prophecies, priesthoods, sacri-
fices, their temple, and all their sacraments whatever did
rebound, or express ^{**1 Pet. i. 10, &c.**}

Neither are these things only said according to suppo-
sitions assumed in the New Testament ; but they agree, as
to their general importance, to the sense of the ancient
Jews, who did conceive such mysterious references often
to lie couched under the letter of the Scriptures : they did
suppose every where a *Midrash*, or mystical sense ; which

* Quem Christum—omnis gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetiæ, sa-
cerdotia, sacrificia, templum, et cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt. *Aug.*
ad Pblus. Ep. 8.

SERM. they very studiously (even to an excess of curiosity and **LXXVI.** diligence) searched after: it was a constant and confident

opinion of their doctors, that all things in Moses's law were typical, and capable of allegorical exposition; and Philo's writings (composed immediately after our Saviour's times) do shew that opinion then to have been passable. We have also several instances and intimations thereof in the New Testament: neither is it probable, that our Lord and the Apostles would, in their discourses and disputations with the Jews, have used this way of alleging and interpreting passages of Scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Vid. Chryf. tom. vi. p. 649, &c. Why God should choose to express matters of this nature in such a manner, we need not to determine; it might be perhaps for reasons only known to himself, above our ken or cognizance: yet divers probable reasons may be assigned for it, yea some more than probable, seeing they are expressed or hinted in Scripture. It might be for a decent and harmonious discrimination of times, of dispensations, of persons; it might be from the depth of things to conciliate reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of attaining thereto; it might be by exercise to improve the understandings of men, to inflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them modest and humble; it might be for occasion to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word, and to convey special gifts of interpretation; it might be to conceal some things from some persons unworthy or unfit to know them, especially from haughty and self-conceited persons; it might be to use the ignorance of some, as a means to produce some great events; such as was the misusing and persecuting our Lord: for such reasons it might be, and there is no good reason against it; for it cannot be supposed necessary, that all things should be plainly discovered at all times, and to all persons; it is evident that some things are couched in parabolical and mysterious expressions; it is particularly the manner of prophetic instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear know-

Vid. Chryf. tom. vi. p. 649, &c.
Rev. ii. 7.
xiii. 18.
xvii. 9.
Matt. xiii.
9. xxiv. 15.
Dan ix. 1.
John v. 39.
Luke xxiv. 45.
1 Cor. xii.
10. xiv. 26.
Eph. i. 9,
10.
Matt. xiii.
13. xi. 25.
vii. 6.
1 Cor. ii. 8.
Acts iii. 17.
Gal. iv. 4.
Eph. i. 10.
1 Tim. ii. 6.

ledge of which is not congruous to every season, nor suitable to every capacity; but reserved for times, and persons, for which the divine wisdom only knows them most proper. SERM.
LXXVI.

These things being thus premised, we come to our particular case, and say, that (according to what our Lord and his Apostles teach) the Messiah's being to suffer was in divers passages of the ancient Scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing itself determined to be, there are peculiar reasons, why it rather so, than in a more open manner, should be represented, contained in those words of Tertullian: *The sacrament indeed, saith he, of Christ's passion ought to have been figured in the (ancient) predication; forasmuch as that the more incredible it was, (if it should have been preached nakedly,) the more offensive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be overshadowed, that the difficulty of understanding it might be cause of seeking of God's grace* *. Supposing it also that it should be, it is plain that the passages about Abel, Isaac, Josias, Jeremiah, and the like, may congruously be applied thereto; that the elevation of the Brazen Serpent, and the slaying the Paschal Lamb may appositely represent it; the Jewish priests, with all their sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in, and accommodated thereto: these things indeed by themselves solitarily are not apt peremptorily to evince, that it should be; yet do they handsomely suit it, and adorn the supposition thereof; according to the notion premised about the figurative relation between the matters of the old world before the Messias, and the new one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the Messiah's sufferings were implied in the afflictions ascribed to his representative king David, such as he in several Psalms (in the 35th, 69th, 109th, 118th, and especially in the 22d Psalm) describeth them; wherein divers passages,

* Utique sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in prædicationibus oportuerat, quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum futurum, quantoque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum; ut difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quæreret. *Tert. in Jud. 10.*

SERM. LXXVI. expressing the extreme sadness and forlornness of his condition, occur, which by the history of his life do not so well, according to the literal signification of words, appear congruous to his person; which therefore there is a necessity, or at least much reason, that they should be applied to the Messiah, whom that holy King did represent.

Which being admitted, comparing the passages we find there to that which befell Jesus, we may observe an admirable harmony; there being scarce any part of his affliction in his life, or at any circumstance thereof at his death, which is not in express and emphatical terms there set out. There we have expressed his low and despi-

Pf. xxii. 6. cable estate; (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and despised of the people:*)—the causeless hatred and enmity of the populace and of the great ones toward

Pfal. lxix. 4. xxxv. 7. cix. 3. him; (*They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty; they compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause:*)—the ingrateful requital for all the good intended

Pfal. xxxv. 12. cix. 5. cxviii. 22. and performed by him; (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love:*)—their rejecting him; (*The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner:*)—their insidious and calumnious proceedings

Pf. xxxv. 7. 11. cix. 2. against him; (*Without cause have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul. And, False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not. And, The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue:*)—their bitter

Pfal. xxxv. 13. lxix. 26. insulting over him in his affliction; (*But in mine adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together; yea, the objects gathered themselves together against me:*) They persecute him, whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those, whom thou hast wounded: καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, and to the smart of my wounds they have added; (say the LXX.)—their scornful reviling,

Pfal. xxii. 7, 8. flouting, and mocking him; (*All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot the lip, they shake the head, saying,*

He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him. And, I became a reproach unto them; when they looked upon me, they shook their heads: They opened their mouth wide against me, and said, Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it. *Ἐπειπασάν με, ἔξεμυκτήρισάν με μυκτηρισμῶν, ἔβουζαν ἐν' ἐμὲ τὸς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν* They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me:—their cruel and contemptuous usage of him; (Dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me:—their abusive dealing with him, when he in his distress called for some refreshment; (They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink:—their disposal of his garments upon his suffering; (They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture:—his being deserted of his friends and followers, and thence destitute of all consolation; (I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children;—I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none:—the sense of God's withholding his favour and help; (My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me?—his charitable disposition and demeanour toward his enemies and persecutors; (But as for me, when they were sick, (when they did trouble me, say the LXX.) my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting, and my prayer returned into my own bosom. I behaved myself as though it had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.) Which passages, and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the Gospels, I need not to shew; we do, I presume, all of us well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable history, to be able ourselves to make the application.

But there farther are not only such oblique intimations, or significations of this matter, shrouded under the coverture of other persons and names; but very direct and im-

- SERM.** mediate predictions concerning the Messiah's being to
LXXVI. suffer, most clearly expressed: that whole famous chapter
 (the 53d) of Isaiah doth most evidently and fully declare
 it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends, and conse-
 quences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour
 under them, are graphically represented: his appearing
 meanness, (*He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we
 shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him:*)
 —the disgrace, contempt, repulses, and rejection he under-
 went, (*He is despised and rejected of men—we hid our faces
 from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not:*)—
 his afflicted state, (*He is a man of sorrows, and acquainted
 with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and
 afflicted:*)—the bitter and painful manner of his affliction,
 (*He was stricken; he bare stripes; he was wounded and
 bruised:*)—his being accused, adjudged, and condemned as
 a malefactor, (*He was taken from prison and from judg-
 ment—he was numbered among the transgressors:*)—his
 death consequent, (*He poured out his soul unto death; he
 was cut out of the land of the living:*)—the design and end
 of his sufferings; they were appointed and inflicted by di-
 vine Providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the expi-
 ation of our sins, and our salvation; (*It pleased the Lord
 to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt
 make his soul an offering for sin—he was wounded for our
 transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastise-
 ment of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we
 are healed—surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our
 sorrows—for the transgression of my people he was stricken
 —the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all:*)—his
 sustaining all this with a willing, quiet, humble patience,
 and perfect meekness, (*He was oppressed, and he was af-
 flicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb
 to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb,
 so he openeth not his mouth:*)—his charitable praying for
 his persecutors, and designing their welfare, (*He made
 intercession for the transgressors:*)—the blessed consequences
 and happy success of his sufferings, in the conversion and
 justification of men; in performing God's will and works;

in being satisfied, rewarded, and exalted himself, (*He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many:—I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong:*) which passages, as they do most exactly suit unto Jesus, and might in a fort constitute a true historical narration of what he did endure, together with the doctrines delivered in the Gospel concerning the intents and effects of his sufferings, so that they did, according to the intention of the divine Spirit, relate to the Messias, may from several considerations be made apparent; the context and coherence of all this passage with the matters precedent and subsequent, the which plainly do respect the Messias, and his times, do argue it: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!* and, *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently,* &c. are passages immediately going before; to which this chapter is knit in way of continuation; and immediately after it doth follow, *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear,* &c. being a no less perspicuous than elegant description of the Church, enlarged by accession of the Gentiles, which was to be brought to pass by the Messias. The general scope of this whole prophecy enforceth the same conclusion; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other person imaginable beside the Messias doth farther evince it: so high are the things ascribed to the suffering person; as that he should *bear the sins of all God's people, and heal them*; that he should by his knowledge justify many, (or the multitude;) that *the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand* to these grand purposes; that God would *divide him a portion with the great, and that he should divide the spoil with the strong*: the magnificency and importance of which sayings (rightly understood and weighed) do well agree to the Messias, but not to any other person, or simple man: whence if the ancient Jews had reason to believe a Messias was to come, (as they with general consent did suppose they had,) they

SERM. had as much reason to apply this place, as any other, to
 LXXVI. him, and thence to acknowledge that he was designed to
 be an eminent sufferer. And indeed divers of the ancient
 Targumists and most learned Rabbins did expound this
 place of the one Messias, which was to come; as the *Pugio
 fidei*, and other learned writers, do by several expresse tes-
 timonies declare. This place also discovereth the vanity
 of that figment, devised by some later Jews; who, to
 evade it, and to oppose Jesus, have affirmed there was to
 be a double Messias; one, who should be much afflicted;
 another, who should greatly prosper; since we may ob-
 serve, that here both great afflictions and glorious per-
 formances concurrently are ascribed to the same person.

The same things are by parts also clearly foretold in
 other places of this Prophet, and in other prophetical
 Scriptures; by Isaiah again in the chapter immediately
 preceding, *Behold, saith God there, my servant shall*
 Ifa. lii. 13, *deal prudently; he shall be exalted and extolled, and be*
 14. *very high: there is God's servant (he, who in way of ex-
 cellency is such, that is, in the style of this Prophet, the
 Messias) in his real glorious capacity. It followeth con-
 cerning his external appearance; His visage was so marred
 more than any man's, and his form more than the sons of*
 Ifa. xlix. 7. *men. And again, in the 49th chapter; Thus saith the
 Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him
 whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to
 a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also
 shall worship. What can be more expresse and clear, than
 that it is signified here, that the Messias, who should sub-
 ject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknow-
 ledgment and veneration of himself, was to be despised by
 men, to be detested by the Jewish people, to appear in a
 servile and base condition? The same Prophet doth again,
 in the 50th chapter, bring him in speaking thus: I gave
 my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked
 off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.
 His offending the Jews, so as thereby to aggravate their
 sins, and accelerate their punishments, is also thus ex-
 pressed by the same Prophet: And he shall be for a sanc-*
 Ifa. viii. 14. *(Psal. ii. 2.)*

tuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. SERM. LXXVI.

The Prophet Zechariah doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings, his low condition in those words; *Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; lowly, and riding upon an ass;* (that is, *pauper*, mean and sorry to appearance.) His manner of death in those words: *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.* And again; *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn, &c.* The Prophet Daniel also in that place, from which probably the name *Messias* was taken, and which most expressly mentioneth him, saith, that *after sixty-two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself.* Now from all these passages of Scripture (beside divers others to the same purpose, observable by those, whose industry is assisted by divine illumination) we may well conclude with our Lord, *Ὅτι ἔτω γέγραπται, καὶ ἔτω;* *ἔδωκεν τὸν Χριστὸν* *That thus it was written, and thus* (according to the Prophet's foreshewing) *it was to happen, that the Christ should suffer; suffer in a life of penury and disgrace, in a death of sorrow and shame.* Dan. ix. 26. Luke xxiv. 46.

That it was to fall out thus, might also be well inferred by reasons grounded upon the qualities of the *Messiah's* person, and upon the nature of his performances, such as they are described in propheticall Scripture: he was to be really, and plainly to appear, a person of most admirable virtue and goodness; but never (as even Pagan philosophers have observed) was, or can there be any such without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an universal pattern to men of all sorts (especially to the greatest part of men, that is, to the poor and afflicted) of *all righteousness*; to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty; (*humility, patience, meekness, charity, self-denial, entire resignation to God's will*;) this

SERM. he should not have had opportunity or advantage of doing.
 LXXVI. should he have been high, wealthy, splendid, and prosperous in secular matters : he was to exercise great pity and sympathy toward all mankind ; toward the doing which it was requisite that he should himself taste and feel the inconveniences, troubles, pains, and sorrows incident to us. He was to advance the repute of spiritual goods and eternal blessings, depressing the value of these corporeal and temporal things, which men do so fondly admire and dote on : the most compendious and effectual way of doing which was by an exemplary neglect or rejection of worldly glories and enjoyments ; refusing the honours, profits, and pleasures here, adjoined to a high state. He was by the most kindly, gentle, and peaceable means to erect a spiritual kingdom ; by pure force of reason to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love and obedience of God ; by wise instruction to raise in us the hopes of future recompenses in heaven ; to the accomplishment of which purposes temporal glory (working on the carnal apprehensions and affections of men) had rather been prejudicial than conducive. He was to accomplish and manage his great designs by means supernatural and divine, the which would surely become more conspicuous by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was also most highly to merit from God, for himself, and for us ; (to merit God's high approbation of what he did ; God's favour and grace to us ;) this he could not perform so well, as by willingly enduring, for God's sake, and in our behalf, the most hard and grievous things. He was, in fine, designed *perfectly to save us*, and consequently to appease God's wrath, to satisfy divine justice, to expiate our sins ; whereto it was requisite, that he should undergo what we had deserved, being punished and afflicted for us.

Vide Theodoti Orat.
 in Eph. 1.
 Concil. p.
 997.

Now that Jesus our Lord did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared by the Prophets concerning the Messias, we need not, by minutely relating the known history of his life and death, make out any farther, since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and

no adversary can deny it: I shall therefore conclude, that **SERM.**
 it is a clear and certain truth, which St. Peter in our text **LXXVI.**
 affirmeth, that *those things which God before had shewed*
by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer,
he hath so fulfilled.

Now, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our* **Rev. i. 5, 6.**
sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests
unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for
ever and ever. Amen.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him **Rev. v. 13.**
that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever
and ever. Amen.

SERMON LXXVII.

A WHIT-SUNDAY SERMON OF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Acts ii. 38.

—*And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

SERM.
LXXVII.

Eph. ix.
Deut. xvi.

AMONG the divers reasonable grounds and ends of the observing festival solemnities, (such as are comforting the poor by hospitable relief, refreshing the weary labourer by cessation from ordinary toil, maintaining good-will among neighbours by cheerful and free conversation, quickening our spirits and raising our fancies by extraordinary representations and diversifements, infusing and preserving good humour in people^a; such as are also the decent conspiring in public expressions of special reverence to God, withdrawing our minds from secular cares, and engaging them to spiritual meditations,) the two principal designs of them seem to be these.

1. The affording occasion (or rather imposing a constraint upon us) with a competent frequency to attend unto, to consider upon, to instruct ourselves and others in the mysterious doctrines and institutions of our religion.

2. The engaging us seasonably to practise that great

^a Οἱ δὲ εἰστίθοντες τὸ τῶν ἀδελφῶν παύσειν σιγῆς γίνεσθαι, ἀναπαύεσθαι ἐν αὐτοῖς τῶν πόνοι ἰσχύοντες, καὶ τῶν ἰσχυρῶν ἀμειβῆς τοῖς θείοις. Plato 2. de Leg.

Legum conditores festos instituerunt dies, ut ad hilaritatem homines publice cogerentur, tanquam necessarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum. Sen. de tranq. an. 15.

duty of thankfully remembering and praising God for those eminent mercies and favours, which by his great grace and goodness have been vouchsafed to us. SERM. LXXVII.

For these purposes chiefly did God himself appoint the Jewish festivals; for instance, the Passover, the reason of which being instituted is thus expressed; *that thou mayest remember the day, when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt, all the days of thy life:* which words imply that the observation of that solemnity did serve to preserve the memory, yea the continual remembrance of that so notable a blessing, which otherwise might have been totally forgotten, or seldom considered; the same did also suggest occasion of inquiry concerning the reasons of its appointment, procuring consequently needful information in that material point of their religion; as doth appear by those words of God, *And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover—* Deut. xvi.
Exod. xii.
26, 27.

In compliance with which prudent designs, the Christian Church, from her first infancy, hath embraced the opportunity of recommending to her children the observation of her chief holy festivals, continuing the time, and retaining the name, although changing or improving the matter and reason of those ancient ones; the divine Providence concurring to further such proceeding, by so ordering the events of things, that the seasons of dispensing the evangelical blessings should fall in with those, wherein the legal benefits most resembling and representing them were commemorated; that so there might be as well a happy coincidence of time, as correspondence in matter between the ancient and new solemnities; whence as the exhibition of evangelical doctrines and mysteries did meet with minds more suitably prepared to entertain them, and as less innovation from former usage did appear, (a thing observable to be respected in most, or all the positive institutions of our religion,) so withal Christians were engaged, while they considered the fresh greater mercies by God vouchsafed Aug. de Civ. Dei, x. 4.

SERM.
LXXVII.

Deut. xvi.

to them, to reflect also upon the favours, from the same stock of goodness, indulged by him to his ancient people; that as those should chiefly be remembered, so these should not wholly be forgotten: thus did God dispose, that our Saviour should then suffer, when the Paschal Lamb was to be offered; or that the redemption of the world from sin and misery should then be celebrated by us, when the deliverance from the Egyptian slavery was commemorated by them: and so (that we may approach to our purpose) at the time of Pentecost, when the Jews were obliged to *rejoice before the Lord*, rendering thanks unto him for the harvest newly gathered in, and the earth's good fruits (the main supports and comforts of this life) were by God's blessing bestowed on them, then did God bountifully impart the first-fruits of his Holy Spirit, the food of our souls and refreshment of our hearts; then did he cause his labourers to put their sickle into the spiritual harvest; converting souls, and gathering them as mature fruits into the garners of the Church.

Exod. xix.
1.

At the very season also (which is remarkable) that the Law was delivered to the Jews, and the ancient covenant established which did happen at Pentecost, as may be probably collected from the text, and is commonly supposed by the Jewish Doctors, who therefore called this feast שמחה תורה, *the joy* (or joyful feast) of the Law, in signification of their joy, using then to crown their heads with garlands, and strew their houses with green herbs; at that very time was the Christian law most signally promulged, and the new covenant's ratification most solemnly declared by the miraculous effusion of the divine Spirit.

The benefit therefore and blessing, which at this time we are bound especially to consider and commemorate^b, is in effect the publication and establishment of the covenant evangelical, the foundation of all our hopes; and all

^b Πνεύματος ἐκστάζομεν, καὶ πνύματος ἐκδημιαν, καὶ προδουρίαν ἐπαγγελίας, καὶ ἐκδόσης συμπαθήσεων, &c. Naz. Orat. 44.

our claims to happiness; but more immediately and directly the donation of the Holy Spirit to the Christian Church, and to all its members; for the better understanding and more truly valuing of which most excellent benefit, let us briefly declare the nature and design thereof.

SERM.
LXXVII.

Almighty God, seeing the generality of mankind alienated from himself by gross ignorance of its duty toward him, and by habitual inclinations to violate his holy laws, (originally implanted by him in our nature, or anciently revealed to our first parents,) immersed in error, enslaved to vice, and obnoxious to the woful consequences of them, severe punishment and extreme misery; was pleased in his immense goodness and pity to design its rescue from that sad condition; and, in pursuance of that gracious design, did resolve upon expedients the most admirable and most efficacious that could be: for to redeem men from the tyranny of sin and hell, to reconcile them to himself, to recover them into a happy state, he sent his own only beloved Son out of his bosom into this world, clothed with our nature; by him, as by a Plenipotentiary Commissioner from himself, inviting all men to return unto him; declaring himself, by the meritorious obedience, the expiatory passion, the effectual intercession of his dear Son, abundantly satisfied for, and ready to grant a full pardon of, all offences committed against him in their state of error and estrangement; to admit them into a state of present indemnity and peace, yea to settle them in perpetual alliance and friendship with himself, upon most fair and gentle terms; namely, that, renouncing their erroneous principles, and reforming their vicious courses of life, they cheerfully would embrace his merciful overtures; and thereafter conform their lives to his righteous laws; the which, together with all his good intentions concerning them, he, by the same blessed agent, clearly discovered to them; fully by him instructing them in their duty, and strongly encouraging them to the performance thereof by the promise of most bountiful rewards; his certain love and favour attended with endless joy and

SERM.
LXXVII.

Tit. ii. 11,
12.

blifs : thus *did*, as St. Paul expreffeth it, *the faving grace of God appear unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodlinefs and worldly lufts, we fhould live foberly, righteoufly, and godly in this prefent world, expecting that bleffed hope.*

But to render this wonderfully gracious defign fuccefsful, in a way of wifdom and reafonable proceeding accommodated to the capacities of human nature, it was requifite, that there fhould be provided convincing arguments to perfuade men of the truth and reality of thefe things, (that indeed fuch an extraordinary agent, with fuch a meffage, was come from heaven,) effectual means of admonifhing and exciting men to a heedful advertency toward them, competent motives to a cordial acceptance of them; a power alfo fufficient, notwithstanding their natural impotency and inftability, to continue them in the belief, to uphold them in the practice of the duties prefcribed, in the performance of the conditions required.

For if it were not very credible, that God had truly thofe intentions toward us, or if we did not much regard the overture of them, or if we did not conceive the bufinefs highly to concern us; or if, refolving to comply with the Gofpel, we yet were unable to difcharge the conditions thereof, the defign would totally be frustrated, and of itfelf come to nothing. To prevent which difappointment of his merciful intentions, Almighty God did abundantly provide, in a manner and meafure fuitable to the glorious importance of them; for to the miniftry of his eternal wifdom, he adjoined the efficacy of his eternal love, and bleffed Spirit; the which not only conducted

John iii. 34.

God our Saviour into his flefhly tabernacle, and with *unmeafurable communications* of himfelf did continually refide within him, but alfo did attend him in the conspicuous performance of numberlefs miraculous works, implying divine power and goodnefs, as exceeding not only any natural, but all created power, (fuch as were by mere word and will healing the fick and reftoring the maimed, ejection of evil fpirits, difcerning the fecret thoughts of men, foretelling contingent events, reviving the dead, raifing

himself from the grave;) which works, some expressly, **SERM. LXXVII.**
 others by parity of reason, are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; for, *If, faith our Lord, I by the Spirit of God cast out* Matt. xii.
devils—and, God, faith St. Peter, anointed him with the 28. Acts x. 38.
Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good,
and healing all that were oppressed by the devil: and,
Who, faith St. Paul, was declared to be the Son of God, Rom. i. 4.
according to the Holy Spirit, by the resurrection from the
dead: so did God afford the most evident attestation that
could be to the truth of our Saviour's quality, commission,
and doctrine; by so clear and rousing significations did
God invite men to take notice of these things.

But farther to induce them heartily to comply with these gracious overtures, and to render them thoroughly available to the purpose designed, the salvation of men, according to the terms prescribed of faith in God, and obedience to his commandments, God was pleased farther to resolve, and he faithfully did promise, that he would impart the same blessed Spirit, as a continual guide and assistant to all those, who seriously would entertain those tenders of mercy, sincerely resolving the performance of the conditions.

Now although the natural and ordinary manner of this divine Spirit's operation (like that of all spirits and more subtle substances) is not by violent and sensible impressions^c, but rather in way of imperceptible penetration, or gentle insinuating of itself into the subject upon which it worketh, hardly discovering itself otherwise than by the notable effects resulting from it; and although likewise the proper and principal effects thereof, according to divine designation, do relate to the furthering our performance of the said conditions requisite toward our salvation, that is, to the cherishing our faith and quickening our obedience; disposing men to perform virtuous actions, rather than to achieve wondrous exploits; yet more fully to satisfy the doubtful, to convince the incredulous (to

^c Καὶ γὰρ οὐ θείας ἀπίλευσας χείρας βασιζόμενος, καὶ πνεύματος μυστικός, εἰ ποὺ μὴ πρὸς τὸ σημεῖα ποιῶν, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἀπὸ πρὸς τὸ πνευματικόν ἔρχεται, καὶ κερταμὴν λαβὼν. *Chrys. Tom. vi. Orat. 12. ad Demet.*

SERM.
LXXVII.

Acts ii. 19.
43. iv. 14.
ix. 11, 16.
1 Cor. xiv.
25.

confound the obstinate world about the truth of his intentions, more illustriously to manifest the completion of his promise, more surely to fortify the faithful against the scandals and temptations, which their profession would incur, God was pleased after our Lord's ascension, and when the apostolical promulgation of the Christian doctrine did commence, to dispense both to the teachers and the disciples thereof more liberal communications of that Holy Spirit, attended with notorious, strange, and wonderful effects, apt to provoke the admiration of men, to persuade their judgments, to prevail upon their affections, to produce within them strong desires of partaking so high a privilege and excellent endowment.

The memorial therefore of that most gracious and glorious dispensation, the Christian Church wisely and piously hath continually preserved, obliging us at this time peculiarly to bless God for that incomparable and inestimable gift, conferred then most visibly upon the Church, and still really bestowed upon every particular member, duly incorporated thereinto.

I say bestowed upon every particular member of the Church; for the evangelical covenant doth extend to every Christian; and a principal ingredient thereof is the collation of this Spirit: which is the *finger of God*, whereby (according to the Prophet Jeremiah's description of that covenant) *God's law is put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts; inscribed, as St. Paul allusively speaketh, not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart; not only, as the Jewish law represented, from without to the senses, but impressed within upon the mind and affections; whence God's Spirit is called the Spirit of promise, the donation thereof being the peculiar promise of the Gospel; and the end of our Saviour's undertaking is, by St. Paul declared, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith, that is, by embracing Christianity might*

Πνεῦμα τῆς
ἐπαγγελίας.
Eph. i. 13.

Gal. iii. 14.

^d Τῶν γὰρ χαρισμάτων τῶν πνευματικῶν τὰ μὲν ἀρχαῖά ἐστιν καὶ εἶς τε πανταλῶνεται μόνῃ, τὰ δὲ καὶ αἰσθητὸν ἰδεῖν οὐκ ἐστιν ἐκ μέρους πρὸς τὸν τῶν ἀπίστων πλάκωσιν. Chrys. Tom. v. Orat. 88.

partake thereof, according to God's promise; and the apostolical ministry or exhibition of the Gospel is styled **SERM. LXXVII.** *the ministration of the Spirit*; and *tasting of the heavenly gift, and participation of the Holy Ghost* is part of a Christian's charter; and the suscepcion of Christianity is thus described by St. Paul; *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath chosen you from the beginning to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*: and your Saviour instructed Nicodemus, that *no man can enter into the kingdom of God* (that is, become a Christian, or subject of God's spiritual kingdom) *without being regenerated by water, and by the Spirit*, that is, without baptism, and the spiritual grace attending it; according as St. Peter doth in the words adjoining to our text imply, that the reception of the Holy Spirit is annexed to holy baptism: *Repent, saith he, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*; for the promise (that great promise of the Holy Ghost) is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call; that is, the Holy Spirit is promised to all, how far soever distant in place or time, whoever shall be invited unto, and shall embrace the Christian profession. St. John also maketh it to be the distinctive mark of those, in whom Christ abideth, and who dwell in Christ, that is, of all true Christians, to have this Spirit; *Hereby, saith he, we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us*; and, *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit*. And St. Paul denieth him to be a good Christian who is destitute thereof; *Now, saith he, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*: and, *Know ye not, saith he to the Corinthians, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*? that is, Do ye not understand this to be a common privilege of all Christians, such as ye profess yourselves to be? And the conversion of men to Christianity he thus expresth; *After the kindness and love of God our Saviour*

Διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος.

2 Cor. iii. 8.

Heb. vi. 4.

2 Thess. iii.

13.

John iii. 51

Acts ii. 38,

39.

1 John iii.

24.

1 John iv.

13.

Rom. viii.

9.

1 Cor. iii.

16.

Tit. iii. 4,

5.

SERM. LXXVII. *toward man appeared; not by any righteous works which we had done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. And all pious dispositions qualifying us for entrance into heaven and happiness (faith, charity, devotion, every grace, every virtue) are represented to be fruits of the Holy Spirit: and the union of all Christians into one body, the catholic society of all truly faithful people, doth, according to St. Paul, result from this one Spirit, as a common soul animating and actuating them: For, saith he, by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free; and have all been made to drink of one Spirit.*

Gal. v. 22.
Eph. v. 9.
Rom. iv. 5.

† Cor. xii.
13.

In fine, whatever some few persons, or some petty sects (as the Pelagians of old, the Socinians now) may have deemed, it hath been the doctrine constantly, and with very general consent delivered in the Catholic Church, that to all persons by the holy mystery of baptism duly initiated to Christianity, or admitted into the communion of Christ's body, the grace of God's Holy Spirit certainly is bestowed, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue then undertaken by them; enlightening their minds, rectifying their wills, purifying their affections, directing and assisting them in their practice; the which holy gift (if not abused, ill treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill behaviour) will perpetually be continued, improved, and increased to them: it is therefore by Tertullian (in his Prescriptions against Heretics) reckoned as part of that fundamental rule, which was grounded upon the general tradition and consent of the Christian Church, that *Christ had sent the virtue of the Holy Ghost in his room, which doth act believers*^c; to which that article doth answer of the Apostolical Creed, in which we profess to *believe the Holy Ghost*; meaning, I suppose, thereby not only the bare existence of the Holy Ghost, but also its gracious communication and energy.

^c *Tert. de Presc. 13*—*misisse vicariam vim Spiritus Sancti, qui credentes agat.*

Since therefore the collation of this eminent gift and SERM.
LXXVH.
favour so nearly doth concern us all; seeing it is our present duty more especially to praise and bless God for it; seeing also we are wont to commensurate our gratitude to our estimation of the benefit, unto which it relateth; let us a little consider the worth and excellency of this divine gift conferred on us.

That it is transcendently valuable we may in general hence collect, that even in our Lord's esteem it did not only countervail, but in a manner surmount the benefit of his presence; *Συμπέρα, It is, said he, expedient* (or profit- John xvi.
able) *for you that I go away*; God having designed, that⁷ my absence shall be supplied by the Comforter's more beneficial presence: and wonderfully beneficial surely must that presence be, which could not only compensate, but render advantageous the loss of that most benign and sweet conversation, that tender and watchful inspection, that wholesome and powerful advice, that clear and lively pattern of all goodness shining forth in our Saviour's life upon his Disciples. Could there be a more indulgent Master, a more discreet Guide, a more delightful Companion, a more faithful Friend, a mightier Protector, a surer Assistant, a sweeter Comforter than he? Yes, it seemeth that our Saviour did apprehend, that upon some accounts those benefits with greater advantage might accrue to them by the gift of his Spirit, than by his own immediate presence; that it by internal operation could more clearly inform the mind, more strongly incline the will, more vigorously affect the heart, than any exterior word or example could do: neither could our Saviour, according to the condition of his humanity, limited to particularities of time and place, so perfectly correspond to the various exigencies of mankind, as that omnipotent Spirit, intimately present to, uniformly diffused through all things: Him therefore did our Saviour leave the guardian of his otherwise orphan Disciples; him did he substitute to undergo the care and tuition of them, to conduct them in the right way, to preserve them from dangers, to comfort them in distresses, to manage all their concerns, to

*οὐκ ἀφῆκεν
ἡμᾶς ὁρφανούς.
John xiv.
18.*

SERM. be their counsellor, monitor, advocate, and patron; by
LXXVII. him he meant fully to make good his word, *that he would
 be with them till the end of this world*¹.

But more distinctly to survey the many benefits and advantages proceeding from this excellent gift unto us, we may observe, that on it the foundation, the improvement, the completion of all our good and happiness do depend; that to the Holy Spirit in truth and justice are to be ascribed, 1. our better state and being; 2. our spiritual powers and abilities; 3. our good and acceptable performances; whatever we are, whatever we can do, whatever we actually do perform as Christians.

1. We owe to the Holy Spirit our spiritual state and being; our spiritual life, our freedom, our honourable condition.

Πνεῦμα
 ζωοποιῶν.

1 Cor. xv.

45.

John vi. 63.

Eph. ii. 1, 5.

1 Pet. i. 23.

It is by virtue of this *quicken*ing Spirit, that from death and corruption we are raised to an immortal and indefectible state of life; that, as St. Paul saith, we, that *were dead in trespasses and sins, are quickened together with Christ*; we by this *incorruptible seed are born again*; not, as formerly, to a life of vanity and misery, or to the enjoyment of a few transitory delights, tempered with many vexatious inconveniences, pains, and troubles; but to sure capacities of most solid and durable contentments, *to a living hope of an incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for us.*

1 Pet. i. 3,
 4.

It is thereby we are free men, enjoying a true and perfect liberty; being enfranchised from divers intolerable slaveries, to which we naturally are subjected, and from which otherwise we could not be exempted; from the dominion of a rigorous law², which prescribeth hard duties, but doth not afford strength to perform them; apt to condemn us, but not able to convert us; from the clamorous accusations of a guilty conscience, with anxious fears of punishment, that *spirit of bondage unto fear*, of which St. Paul speaketh; from the tyranny of a most crafty, spite-

Gal. iv. 24.

Rom. viii,
 15.

¹ ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος. Matt. xxviii. 20.

² Lex omniū potuit obstruere, non potuit mentem convertere. *Amb.*

ful, and cruel enemy, that wicked one who did *captivate* **SERM.**
us at his pleasure, and detained us under his power; from **LXXVII.**
the no less unjust, no less mischievous domination of our
own flesh, or natural concupiscence, imposing grievous tasks
and destructive necessities upon us; *It is,* saith St. Paul, *the*
law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which setteth us
free from these laws of sin and of death; so that, *where the*
Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

From such base thralldoms we thereby are redeemed,
and not only so, but are advanced to an honourable con-
dition, are ennobled with illustrious relations, are entitled
to glorious privileges: all the benefits and immunities
contained in the charter of the new Jerusalem; all the ad-
vantages and privileges appropriated to God's court and
family thereby appertain unto us; for *we have,* saith St. Eph. ii. 18,
Paul, *access by one Spirit unto the Father,* and are thence
no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the
saints, and of the household of God: by this *holy unction*
we are consecrated *kings and priests unto God;* by partici-
pation of this *immortal seed* we are engrafted into alliance
with the heavenly King, become children of God, brethren
of Christ, heirs of Paradise, (an infinitely better Paradise
than that from which we formerly were excluded;) for
this is that *πνεῦμα υιοθεσίας*, that Spirit which constituteth
us the sons of God, qualifying us to be so by dispositions
resembling God, and filial affections toward him; certifi-
ing us that we are so, and causing us by a free instinct to
cry, Abba, Father, running into his bosom of love, and
flying under the wings of his mercy in all our needs and
distresses; whence *as many as are led by the Spirit, they,*
saith St. Paul, *are the sons of God;* and, *the Spirit itself*
beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of
God; yea, which may seem yet a farther pitch of dignity,
we, by intervention of this Spirit, are united and incorpo-
rated into Christ himself, being made living members of
his body, partaking a common life and sense with him;
by it we are compacted into the same spiritual edifice,
dedicated to the worship and inhabitation of God; our
bodies, and souls are made temples of his divinity, thrones

SERM. of his majesty, orbs of his celestial light, paradises of his
 LXXVII. blissful presence; for, *In whom, saith St. Paul, ye are built together for an inhabitation of God through the Spirit; and,*
 Eph. ii. 22. *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the*
 1 Cor. iii. 16. *Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

By the Holy Spirit we are instated in these unconceivably glorious privileges, and by it only we are assured of them, to our comfort; the gift of it, as it is a great part of them, and the chief cause, so it is a sure confirmation and pledge; *Ye, saith St. Paul, were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance; and, It is God who did establish us with you in Christ, and anointed us, and also sealed us, and gave the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts:* all which phrases do import the same thing, that is, a comfortable assurance concerning the reality of the benefits by divine grace exhibited and promised to us.

2. Neither only relatively and extrinsically is our state bettered and exalted from death to life, from slavery to freedom, from baseness to dignity; but ourselves answerably are changed and amended by the same Holy Spirit; with a real and intrinsecal alteration, transforming us into other things, much different from what we were in our former natural state; by that *renovation of the Holy Ghost*, of which St. Paul speaketh, we are, saith he, *renewed in the spirit of our mind;* so that not only the decayed frame of our soul is thereby repaired and reformed, but its powers are much improved and enlarged; we are thence endued with new and better faculties, as it were; with quicker apprehensions, with sincerer judgments, with righter inclinations, with nobler passions, than we had before, yea, than we could have had in our original state; so that in the language of holy Scripture we thence become *new men, and new creatures, created according to God in righteousness and true holiness;* according to God, that is, in conformity to the divine perfections of rectitude in mind and will, so as to resemble God in a higher degree, and more worthy respects, than formerly. Our father Adam was made *εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν*, a creature endued

with life and sense, furnished with powers and appetites SERM.
 disposing to acquire, preserve, and enjoy the conveniences LXXVII.
 agreeable to that frame; and we naturally are *ψυχικοί ἄν- 1 Cor. ii.*
δραστοί, animal men; such as naturally do apprehend, do ^{14.}
 affect, do pursue things concerning this present life; the
 pleasures of sense, and the satisfactions of fancy; freedom
 from want and pain, security from danger and disturbance,
 together with the means we suppose conducive to those,
 wealth, honour, and power; these are those *desires of the* Θηλήματα
flesh and of the mind, the things which according to our σαρκίς καὶ
 natural temper and frame we like and approve; which τῶν διανοιών.
Eph. ii. 3.
 most men therefore do highly value, passionately love, and
 earnestly seek: nor doth nature only incline us to a com-
 placence in these things, but customary fruition greatly
 endeareth them to us; so that we continually improve our
 acquaintance, and contract a firmer alliance with them;
 but spiritual and divine things (*the things of the Spirit of*
God^h, as St. Paul calleth them) we cannot receive; that is, Δίχυσθαι.
 simply of ourselves, without aid of another interior princi-
 ple, we have no capacity to apprehend them, no disposition
 to entertain them, no strength to pursue them; they, as
 the Apostle saith, *are foolishness to us*, that is, incongruous
 to our prejudicate notions, and insipid to our corrupt
 palates.

Such doctrines as these; that our felicity consisteth not
 in affluence of temporal enjoyments, but in dispositions of
 soul crossing our humours, curbing our appetites, and
 quelling our passions; in conformity of practice to rules
 distasteful to our sense; in the love and favour of an invi-
 sible Being; in reversion of an estate not to be possessed
 until after our death in another world; that none of these
 present things do well deserve our serious regard, affection,
 or care, and that it is blameable to be solicitous about
 them; that naked goodness (how low, weak, and poor
 soever) is to be chosen before all the specious pomps and
 glories of this world; that the secret testimony of con-
 science is to be preferred before all the approbation and ap-

^h τὰ τῷ πνεύματι τῷ Θεῷ. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

SERM. LXXVII. plaufe of men; that the hope of future joy should over-
 fway the defire of prefent moft certain and fenfible de-
 lights; that the lofs of all things may fometime be deemed
 our greateft gain, being contemned our higheft honour,
 enduring afflictions our moft defirable condition, death our
 fureft welfare, a crofs preferable to a crown; that accord-
 ingly it is often advantageous and expedient for us, and a
 duty incumbent on us, willingly to difcard our deareft
 contents of life, to facrifice our moft valued intereft, to
 forfake our neareft relations, to refufe what we moft affect,
 to undertake what we moft diftate, to undergo without
 reluctancy or regret the moft bitter accidents that can be-
 fall us; that we muft (to ufe the holy ftyle) *hate our own*
souls, deny ourfelves, and take up our crofs, quit houfes and
lands, defert kindred and friends; ἀποτάσσεται πᾶσι τοῖς
 εἰσὶν ὑπαρχούσι *to renounce, or bid farewell to, all that he*
hath, or owneth, cut off our right hands, and pluck out our
right eyes; circumcife our hearts, mortify our members;
crucify our flefh, with its affections and lufts; be crucified
to the world; to account all worldly things damage, dross,
and dung, in comparifon to fpiritual goods: that we muft
fo far remit and refrain our felf-love, as to love all men,
not excluding our greateft enemies, as ourfelves; fo as
not only to part freely with our particular accommoda-
tions, but upon occafion, in imitation of our Saviour, to
lay down our lives for them; fo as not only to comport
with their infirmities, but to requite their extremeft inju-
ries with good-will and good turns; fo as to do good to
all men, to return no evil to any; to blefs them that curfe
us, to do good to them that hate us, to pray for them which
defpitefully ufe us, and perfecute us.

John xii.

25.

Luke ix. 23.

xiv. 26. 33.

Matt. xvi.

24. v. 29.

Col. iii. 5.

Gal. v. 24.

vi. 14.

Rom. vi. 6.

Phil. iii. 7,

8.

Matt. v.

44.

John vi. 60.

Col. i. 21.

These and fuch like dictates of the Spirit are hard and
 harfh fayings, abfurd to our natural conceit, and abomi-
 nable to our carnal humour; we cannot readily fwallow
 them, we cannot eafily digeft them; in refpect to them we
 as mere men are ἐχθροὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, *enemies in our mind, or*
reafon; our difcourfe prefently doth contradict and oppofe
them; our reafon is fhut up, and barred with various ap-
petites, humours, and paffions againft fuch truths; nor

can we admit them into our hearts, except God by his **SERM.**
 Spirit do *set open our mind*, and work a free passage for **LXXVII.**
 them into us; it is *he who commanded the light to shine* Διανοίγειν
out of darkness, who must, as St. Paul speaketh, *illustrate* τὸν νῦν.
our hearts with the knowledge of these things: an *unction* Λύκε xxiv.
from the holy One, clearing our eyes, softening our hearts, 45.
 healing our distempered faculties, must, as St. John in- 2 Cor. iv. 6.
 formeth us, *teach* and persuade us this sort of truths: a Acts. xvi.
 hearty faith of these seemingly incredible propositions must 14.
 indeed be, as St. Paul calleth it, *the gift of God*, proceed- 1 John ii.
 ing from that *Spirit of faith*, whereof the same Apostle 27.
 speaketh; such faith is not, as St. Basil saith, *engendered* Eph. ii. 8.
by geometrical necessities, but by the effectual operations of Phil. i. 29.
the Holy Ghost: *Flesh and blood will not reveal unto us,* 1 Cor. xii. 9.
nor can any man with clear confidence say, that Jesus (the Πνεῦμα τῆς
 author, master, and exemplifier of these doctrines) *is the* σάρκα.
Lord, (the Messias, the infallible Prophet, the universal 2 Cor. iv.
 Lawgiver, the Son of the living God,) *but by the Holy* 13.
Ghost: *Every spirit, which sincerely confesseth him to be* Matt. xvi.
the Christ, who hath enjoined these precepts, we may with 17.
 St. John safely conclude to *be of God*; for of ourselves *we* 1 Cor. xii.
are not sufficient, as the Apostle saith, *λογίζεσθαι τι, to rea-* 3.
son out, or collect, any of these things; we never of our 1 John iv. 2.
 own accord, without divine attraction, should *come unto* 2 Cor. iii. 5.
Christ, that is, should effectually consent unto and embrace John vi. 44.
 his institution, consisting of such unplaussible propositions
 and precepts: hardly would his own Disciples, who had
 so long enjoyed the light of his instruction and conversa-
 tion, have admitted it, if he had not granted to them that
Spirit of truth, whose work it was *ὁδηγεῖν*, to lead them in John xvi.
 this unknown and uncouth way, *ἀναγγέλλειν*, to tell them 13.
 again and again, that is, to instil and inculcate these crab- John xiv.
 bed truths upon them, *ὁπομιμνήσκειν*, to admonish, excite, 26.
 and urge them to the marking and minding them; hardly,
 I say, without the guidance of the Spirit, would our
 Lord's Disciples have admitted divers evangelical truths,

¹ Πίστες ἐπὶ ἐν γλωσσικαῖς ἀνάγκαις, ἀλλ' ἢ τῷ πνεύματι ἐν ἐνεργίᾳ λειτουργοῦν.
 Bas. in Pf. cxv.

SERM. as our Lord himself told them; *I have, said he, many*
 LXXVII. *things beside to say to you, but ye cannot as yet bear them :*
 John xvi. *but when he, the Spirit of truth, shall come, he shall con-*
 12, 13. *duct you into all truth.*

As for the mighty sages of the world, the learned
 1st Cor. i. 20, scribes, the subtle disputers, the deep politicians, the *wise*
 &c. *men according to the flesh*, the men of most refined judgment, and improved reason in the world's eye, they were more ready to deride, than to regard, to impugn, than to admit these doctrines : to the *Greeks who sought wisdom*, the preaching of them did seem *foolishness*.

It is true, some few sparks or flashes of this divine knowledge may possibly be driven out by rational consideration; philosophy may yield some twilight glimmerings thereof; common reason may dictate a faint consent unto, may produce a cold tendency after some of these things : but a clear perception, and a resolute persuasion of mind, that *full assurance of faith*^k, and *inflexible confession of hope*^l, which the Apostle to the Hebrews speaketh of; that *all riches of the full assurance of understanding*, that *abundant knowledge of the divine will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding*^m, with which St. Paul did pray
 Col. i. 9. that his Colossians might *be replenished*; these so perfect illustrations of the mind, so powerful convictions of the heart, do argue immediate influences from the fountain of life and wisdom, the divine Spirit. No external instruction could infuse, no interior discourse could excite them, could penetrate those opacities of ignorance, and dissipate those thick mists of prejudice, wherein nature and custom do involve us; could so thoroughly awaken the lethargic stupidity of our souls; could supple the refractory stiffness of our wills, could mollify the stony hardness of our hearts, could void our natural aversion to such things, and quell
 Rom. viii. that *φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός*, that *carnal mind*, the which, St. Paul
 7. *saith, is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law*
 2 Cor. x. 4, *of God, neither indeed can be*; could depress those *ὀψώματα*,
 5.

^k Πληροφορία τῆς πίστεως. Heb. x. 22.

^l Ὁμολογία τῆς ἐλπίδος ἀληθείας. Heb. x. 23.

^m Πᾶς πλῆτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς γνώσεως. Col. ii. 2.

those lofty towers of self-conceit, reared against the knowledge of God, and demolish those *δυσωμάτια*, those bulwarks of self-will and perverse stomach opposed against the impressions of divine truth; and captivate *πάν νόημα*, every conceit and device of ours to the obedience of Christ and his discipline. Well therefore did St. Paul pray in behalf of his Ephesians, that God would bestow on them *that spirit of wisdom and revelation in the acknowledgment of him, and that the eyes of their mind* (or reason) *might be enlightened, so as to know the hope of their calling; that is, to understand and believe the doctrines of Christianity, which upon condition of obedience did promise felicity to them.*

SERM.
LXXVII.

So is the light of spiritual knowledge, together with a temper of mind, disposing to receive it, communicated to us; but farther also by the same divine power and spirit are our vital heat and vigour, our active strength and courage imparted. For as mere men, we are not only blind to discern, dull to conceive, backward to undertake the necessary duties of virtue and piety; but we are also dead, heartless, and unwieldy, lame and impotent, indisposed and incapable to perform them: though we should competently apprehend our duty, and our spirit thence should be *willing*; yet *our flesh*, or natural power, *is weak*: we may, as St. Paul instructeth us, in our judgment consent that *the Law is holy, just, and good*; and consequently to *will may be present to us*; that is, we may be desirous, and in some measure resolved to obey it; yea, we may *have some interior rational complacency therein*; and yet not have ability to act according to these dictates and desires; for *to will is present with me*, (saith he in the person of a man endued only with natural strength, abstracting from the subsidiary virtue and operation of the divine Spirit,) *but to perform that which is good, I find not*; I perceive not any means or way of effecting it: knowledge therefore, and willingness to do good, doth not suffice; we need a prevalent force to stir and raise this unwieldy bulk, to overpoise our natural propensions, to subdue the reluctancies, and check the importunities of sense, to correct bad

Eph. i. 17.
18.
Τὴν διανοίαν.

Matt. xxvi.
41.
Rom. vii.
12, 16.
Σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός.
Rom. vii.
22.
Συνθέλωμαι τῷ νόμῳ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἰσχυρῶν.
Rom. vii.
18.
Τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὰ καλὰ, ὃς οὐ δύναμαι.

SERM. LXXVII. nature, and reclaim from bad custom: the natural might and policy of our single reason, being very feeble and shallow, is not fitly matched to encounter that potent confederacy of enemies, which continually with open violence doth invade and assail us; or which by clandestine wiles doth watch to circumvent and supplant us. Is it easy for us not to dread the frowns, nor to be charmed by the flatteries; to flight both the hatred and favour; to abide the persecutions, and to avoid the allurements of this world; this wicked, violent, deceitful world, which is ever ready to deter from good, and entice us to evil?

- 1 Pet. ii. 11. Is it easy to restrain and repress those *fleshly lusts, which,*
 Jam. iv. 1. as St. Peter saith, *do war against our souls*, combating them with their own forces, using their own faculties and members as weapons against them? Is it easy to rescue ourselves from that *other law in our members, that warreth against the law of our understanding, and captivateth us to the law of sin?* Is it a small matter to set upon, to grapple with, to knock down that gigantic Philistine, inordinate self-love, (the root of injustice, pride, envy, malice, ambition, and avarice within us,) which naturally is so tall and stout; which, if not checked in its progress, will daily grow in stature and strength? Is it a slight business to detect, to counterplot, to decline or defeat those *μαθοδαίαι*, those *devices*, or *subtile trains*, and sleights of the tempter; *to wrestle with principalities, with powers, with the rulers of this darksome world, with the spiritualities of wickedness* surrounding us? May we not reasonably in comparison to these mighty Anakim be (as the children of Israel anciently were) *in our own fight as grasshoppers*, quite despairing by our own strength to vanquish, to resist them?

- In our spiritual conflict with such dangerous and dreadful adversaries, we do need an *ἐπιχορηγία τοῦ πνεύματος*, as Phil. i. 19. St. Paul speaketh, that is, *a large supply of the Spirit*, a collation of auxiliary forces, an habitual support derived from that invincible and infallible Spirit, which only is stronger and wiser than they; we need to be armed with that *δύναμις ἐξ ὐψους*, that *power from on high*, or heavenly
 Luke xxiv. 49. (Isa. lix. 19.)

might; whereby the Apostles were enabled to fight their **SERM.**
noble battles, and to achieve their glorious conquests, **LXXVII.**
subduing the rebellious world, and baffling the powers of
darkness; we need *δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι, to be strengthened* Eph. iii. 16.
with might by Christ's Spirit in the inward man, as St. Col. i. 11.
Paul expresseth it; whereby, as he, we may *πάντα ἰσχύειν,*
be able to do all things, or to accomplish the most difficult Phil. iv. 13.
parts of our duty; without which *we can do nothing,* that John xv. 5.
is, cannot discharge the most easy things required of us;
all our sufficiency is of God; it is he, who *out of his good-* 2 Cor. iii. 5.
ness doth effect in us both to will and to perform; his Spirit Phil. ii. 13:
taking part with our infirmities, and thereby giving us ad- *τὸ πνεῦμα*
vantage over all opposition and difficulty. The chief rea- *συναντιλαμ-*
son why we *do not sin,* or persist in a course of disobed- *βάνται ταῖς*
ience to the laws of God, is, as St. John telleth us, *because* *ἀσθενείας*
the divine seed abideth in us, that root of divine life, and *ἡμῶν—*
vital activity implanted in us by the Holy Spirit; that Rom. viii.
divine nature, (as St. Peter styleth it,) that principle and 26.
spring of spiritual motion by him inserted in us; from 1 John iii.
which only seed or nature do sprout all heavenly graces 9.
and virtuesⁿ. 1 Pet. i. 23.
2 Pet. i. 4.
Θεία φύσις.
Vis divinæ
gratiæ, po-
tentior uti-
que natura.
Tertull.

The principal and original virtue, charity, (*the root,*
the fountain, the mother of all goodness, as St. Chrysostom
calleteth it^o;) even that *is shed abroad in our hearts by the* Rom. v. 5.
Holy Spirit given unto us, as St. Paul telleth us; and the
fruit, saith he, of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteous- Eph. v. 9.
ness and truth; and, *love, peace, long suffering, benignity,* Gal. v. 22.
goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, are by the same di-
vine Apostle reckoned streams from the same source, fruits
of the same rich and goodly stock: to it generally are at-
tributed all purification of our hearts, mortification of our
lusts, sanctification of our lives, and consequently salvation
of our souls: Ye, saith St. Paul, *are washed, ye are sancti-* 1 Cor. vi.
fied, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by 11.
the Spirit of our God; and, *God hath chosen us from the* 2 Theff. ii.
beginning to salvation by sanctification of the Spirit, and 13.

ⁿ Οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἀμαρτημάτων μεταβολῆς ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐνεργίας.
Chrys.

^o ῥίζα, καὶ πηγὴ, καὶ μήτηρ πάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν. Chrys.

SERM. *belief of the truth; and, Having, saith St. Peter, purified*
 LXXVII. *our souls in obedience to the truth, by the Spirit, unto cha-*
 1 Pet. i. 22. *rity unfeigned; and, If, saith St. Paul again, by the Spirit*
 Rom. viii. *ye mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live; thus doth*
 13. *our spiritual being and state, together with our life and*
active powers, depend upon the Holy Spirit: and not only
so; but,

3. The continued subsistence and preservation, the actual
 use and exercise of them, all our discreet conduct, all our
 good practice do rely upon him: it is true of our spiritual,
 Ps. civ. 29. *no less than of our natural life. If he doth avert his face,*
we are troubled; if he doth subtract his influence, we die,
and return unto our dust: upon all occasions we do need
 Jer. x. 23. *his direction, aid, and comfort; for the way of man, as*
the Prophet saith, is not in himself; it is not in man that
 Pl. xxxvii. *walketh to direct his steps: It is the Lord, as the Psalmist*
 23. *saith, that ordereth the steps of a good man, and upholdeth*
him with his hand. We have all need to pray with that
 Psal. cxliii. *good man; Cause me to know the way wherein I should*
 8, 10. *walk; teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy*
Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness.

We are vain and uncertain in our opinions, fickle and
 irresolute in our purposes, slow and heavy in our proceed-
 ings; apt to faint and falter, to stumble and slip in all
 our practice; we do need therefore this sure oracle to
 consult in our doubts and darkenesses; this faithful friend
 to direct and advise us in our affairs; this constant mo-
 nitor to rouse and quicken us in our undertakings; this
 powerful guardian to support and establish us in our ways:
 it is, in respect to good men, this steady hand that holdeth
 the helm, and gently steereth their course through the
 blind tracks of religious practice; withdrawing them
 from those dangerous shelves of error and temptation,
 upon which they are apt to split; it is this heavenly gale,
 that filleth their sails with constant resolution, and fairly
 driveth them forward in their voyage toward eternal bliss.
 He softly doth whisper and insinuate good thoughts into
 us; doth kindle pious desires, doth cherish virtuous inten-
 tions, doth promote honest endeavours; he seasonably

checketh and restraineth us from sin; he faithfully re-
proveth and upbraideth us for committing it; he raiseth
wholesome remorse, shame, and displeasure for our un-
worthiness and folly; he sweetly warmeth our cold affec-
tions, inflaming our hearts with devotion toward God;
he qualifyeth us, and encourageth us to approach the
throne of grace, breeding in us faith and humble confi-
dence, prompting us fit matter of request, becoming our
advocate and intercessor for the good success of our
prayers; *through Christ Jesus, saith St. Paul, we have ac-* Eph. ii. 18.
cess by one Spirit unto the Father; and, the Spirit helpeth Rom. viii.
our infirmities; for we know not what we should ask for as 26.
we ought; but the Spirit itself intercedeth for us.

He guardeth us, he standeth by us, he sustaineth us in
all trials and temptations, affording grace sufficient to 2 Cor. xii. 9.
escape or to endure them; *not suffering us to be tempted* 1 Cor. x. 13.
above what we are able.

He supporteth and comforteth us in our afflictions and
distresses of all kinds, of our inward and outward estate:
this David knew when in his penitential agonies he
prayed, *Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not* Psal. li. 11,
thy Holy Spirit from me; restore unto me the joy of thy 12.
salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit: this those
first Christians felt, who, under persecutions and all out-
ward discouragements, were yet *filled with joy, and did* Acts xiii.
walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost; whence that testi- 52. ix. 31,
mony of St. Paul concerning the Thessalonians; *Ye were* 1 Theff. i. 6.
followers of me, and of the Lord, receiving the word in
much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost: by it the
blessed Saints, Martyrs, and Confessors being inspired, did
not only with admirable patience, but incredible alacrity,
undergo the extremest losses, ignominies, and tortures,
which the spite of hell and rage of the world could inflict
on them.

It is, in fine, this Holy Spirit which is the sole author
and spring of all true delight, of all real content within
us; of that *unspeakable joy in believing, that gaiety of* 1 Pet. i. 8.
hope, that satisfaction in well doing: the partaking of his Rom. xv.
society, influence, and consolation, is indeed the most de- 13.
Heb. iii. 6.

SERM. licious repast and richest cordial of our soul; the nearest
LXXVII. resemblance, the sweetest foretaste of Paradise.

So many, so great; yea far more, far greater than, should the time give me leave, I could enumerate or express, are the benefits accruing to us from this most excellent gift of God, by him graciously conferred upon all good Christians; for which we should correspondently endeavour with all our hearts to praise and thank him; in all our lives to make grateful and worthy returns for it; especially by well using it to the greatest purposes, for which it was bestowed, of enabling us to serve God, of preserving us from sin, of conducting us to eternal salvation.

Let us earnestly invite this holy guest unto us, by our prayers unto him, who hath promised to bestow his Spirit upon those which ask it, to impart *this living stream* to every one, which *thirsteth* after it; let us willingly receive him into our hearts, let us treat him with all kind usage, with all humble observance. Let us not exclude him by supine neglect, or rude *resistance*; let us not grieve him by our perverse and froward behaviour toward him; let us not *tempt* him by our fond presumptions, or base treacheries; let us not *quench* his heavenly light and heat by our foul lusts and passions: but let us admit gladly his gentle illapses; let us hearken to his faithful suggestions; let us comply with his kindly motions; let us demean ourselves modestly, consistently, and officiously toward him: that we may so do, God of his infinite mercy grant unto us, through *Jesus Christ our Lord*; to whom, with the same *Holy Spirit*, for ever be all glory and praise. Amen.

O God, the strength of all them that put their trust in thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and because, through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy commandments we may please thee both in will and deed, through *Jesus Christ our Lord*. Amen.

Luke xi. 13.
 John vii.
 37, 38, 39.

Acts vii. 51.
 Eph. iv. 30.
 Isa. lxiii.
 10.
 Acts v. 9.
 1 Thess. v.
 19.

A
DEFENCE
OF THE
BLESSED TRINITY.

TRINITY SUNDAY, 1663.

Φύσις μὲν ἅπας λόγος σαφὲς καὶ εὐκίνητος, καὶ διὰ τὸν ἀντιμαχόμενοι λόγοι ἐλευθερίαι οὐκ ἔχον· ὁ δὲ περὶ Θεοῦ τασούτη μᾶλλον, ὅση μείζον τὸ ὑποκείμενον, καὶ ὁ ζῆλος πλείων, καὶ ὁ κίνδυνος χαλεπώτερος· καὶ γὰρ νοῆσαι χαλεπὸν, καὶ ἑρμηνεύσαι ἀμύχανον, καὶ ἀποῆς κενεθρεμίνης ἐπιτυχεῖν ἐργασίωτερον. *Greg. Naz. Orat. 26.*

Col. iii. 2.

Set your affections on things above.

Φρονεῖν τὰ ἄνω

FOR understanding this apostolical precept, two particulars must be considered; first the act, *φρονεῖν*, (which is rendered to *set our affections*;) then the object, τὰ ἄνω, *things above*: these we briefly shall explain.

The word *φρονεῖν* doth primarily, and also according to common use, denote an advertency, or intent application of the mind upon any object: of the mind, that is, of a man's soul, especially of its rational part; so as to include the powers of understanding, will, affection, activity; whence it may imply direction of our understanding to know; of our will to choose and embrace; of our affection to love, desire, relish; of our activity to pursue any good (real or apparent) which is proposed: according to

which most comprehensive sense (suited the nature of the thing) I do take the word, supposing that St. Paul doth enjoin us to employ all our mental faculties in study, choice, passion, endeavour upon supernal things.

The τὰ ἄνω (things above) may be so taken, as to import all things relating to our spiritual life here, or our future state hereafter; the which do either actually subsist above in heaven, or have a final reference thither: so they may comprise, 1. The substantial beings, to whom we stand related, owe respect, perform duty. 2. The state and condition of our spiritual life here, or hereafter, as we are servants and subjects of God, citizens of heaven, candidates of immortal happiness. 3. Rules to be observed, qualities to be acquired, actions to be performed, means to be used by us in regard to the superior place and state.

Of these things the incomparably principal and supreme, the τὸ ὑπεράνω, is the ever most glorious and blessed Trinity; to the minding of which this day is peculiarly dedicated, and the which indeed is always the most excellent, most beneficial, most comfortable object of our contemplation and affection; wherefore upon it I shall now immediately fix my discourse.

The sacred Trinity may be considered, either as it is in itself wrapt up in unexplicable folds of mystery; or as it hath discovered itself operating in wonderful methods of grace towards us.

As it is in itself, it is an object too bright and dazzling for our weak eye to fasten upon, an abyss too deep for our short reason to fathom: I can only say, that we are so bound to mind it, as to exercise our faith, and express our humility, in willingly believing, in submissively adoring those high mysteries which are revealed in the holy oracles concerning it, by that Spirit itself, *which searcheth the depths of God*, and by that only Son of God, who residing in his Father's bosom, hath thence brought them forth, and *expounded them* to us, so far as was fit for our capacity and use: and the lectures so read by the eternal wisdom of God, the propositions uttered by the mouth of

*Εὐαγγ. λέγ.
γίνεσθαι.
John i. 18.

truth itself, we are obliged with a docile ear, and a credulous heart, to entertain.

That there is one Divine Nature or Essence, common unto three Persons incomprehensibly united, and ineffably distinguished; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations; all equally infinite in every divine perfection, each different from other in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual inexistence of one in all, and all in one; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant; an eternal generation, and an eternal procession, without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependence; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence: these are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving how they agree, but should not stagger our faith in assenting that they are true; upon which we should meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with disposition to admire, veiling our faces in the presence, and prostrating our reason at the feet of wisdom so far transcending us.

There be those, who, because they cannot untie, dare to cut in sunder these sacred knots; who, because they cannot fully conceive it, dare flatly to deny them; who, instead of confessing their own infirmity, do charge the plain doctrines and assertions of holy Scripture with impossibility. Others seem to think they can demonstrate these mysteries by arguments grounded upon principles of natural light; and express it by similitudes derived from common experience. To repress the presumption of the former, and to restrain the curiosity of the latter, the following considerations (improved by your thoughts) may perhaps somewhat conduce.

1. We may consider, that our reason is no competent or capable judge concerning propositions of this nature;
^a *Our breast, as Minutius speaketh, is a narrow vessel, that*

^a Nobis ad intellectum pectus angustum est, &c. *Min. Felix.*

will not hold much understanding; it is not sufficient, nor was ever designed to sound such depths, to descry the radical principles of all being, to reach the extreme possibilities of things. Such an intellectual capacity is vouchsafed to us as doth suit to our degree, (the lowest rank of intelligent creatures,) as becometh our station in this inferior part of the world, as may qualify us to discharge the petty businesses committed to our management, and the facile duties incumbent on us: but to know what God is^b, how he subsisteth, what he can, what he should do, by our natural perspicacity, or by any means we can use, farther than he pleaseth to reveal, doth not suit to the meanness of our condition, or the narrowness of our capacity; these really are the most elevated sublimities, and the abstrusest subtilties that are, or can be, in the nature of things: he that can penetrate them, may erect his tribunal any where in the world, and pretend justly that nothing in heaven or earth is exempted from his judgment. But in truth, how unfit our reason is to exercise such universal jurisdiction, we may discern by comparing it to our sense; it is obvious that many beasts do (by advantage of a finer sense) see, hear, smell things imperceptible to us: and were it not very unreasonable to conclude that such things do not exist, or are in themselves altogether insensible, because they do not at all appear to us? Is it not evident, that we ought to impute their imperceptibility (respecting us) to the defect of our sense, to its dulness and grossness, in regard to the subtilty of those objects? Even so may propositions in themselves, and in regard to the capacity of higher understandings (for there are gradual differences in understanding, as well as in sense) be true and very intelligible, which to our inferior reason seem unintelligible, or repugnant to the prenotions with which our soul is imbued; and our not discerning those truths, may argue the blindness and weakness of our understanding, not any fault or incon-

^b Τὸν μὲν ὅν παντὶν, καὶ παντὶν τοῦτο τοῦ παντός· οὐδαμῶς τι ἕρπον, καὶ οὐδαμῶς τις πάντας· ἄδύνατον ἄλλω. *Plato in Tim.*

sistency in the things themselves; nor should it cause us anywise to distrust them, if they come recommended to our belief by competent authority.

To such purposes indeed the holy Scripture frequently doth vilify our reason and knowledge: *Every man*, saith Jer. x. 14. *Jeremiah, is brutish in knowledge.* *The Lord*, saith the Psal. ciii. Psalmist, *knoweth the thoughts of men, (of wise men, as St. ¹⁴ 1 Cor. iii. Paul quoteth it,) that they are vanity.* *Vain man*, saith 20. *he in Job, would be wise, though man be born like a wild* Job xi. 12. *ass's colt*; that is, however we affect to seem wise, yet to be dull as an ass, to be wild as a colt, is natural to us. *My thoughts*, saith God in the Prophet, *are not your* Isa. lv. 8, 9. *thoughts, nor are your ways my ways: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* God's wisdom is as the heavens, the highest and top of all wisdom; man's as the earth, beneath which there is no degree, but that of hell and darkness: we therefore in this respect are unfit to determine concerning things so exceedingly sublime and subtle.

2. We may consider, that not only the imperfection of our reason itself, but the manner of using it, doth incapacitate us to judge about these matters. Had we competent skill to sail in this deep ocean, yet we do want a gale to drive us, and a compass to steer our course by therein; we have not any firm grounds to build our judgment on, or certain rules to square it by. We cannot effectually discourse or determine upon any subject, without having principles homogeneous and pertinent thereto (that are *ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ συγγενεῖα*, cognate and congruous to the subject- Annal. i. 7. matter, as the Philosopher speaketh) upon which to found our argumentation. Now all the principles we can have are either originally innate to our minds, or afterward immediately infused by God, or by external instruction from him disclosed to us; or acquired by our experience, and observation of things incurring our sense; or framed by our reason, comparing those means; of which the three former sorts are most arbitrarily communicated, and both for number and kind depend upon the free pleasure

ὡς ἰσχυρῶς
Θεὸς ἰσχυρῶς
μὴ γὰρ. of him, who distributeth them according to a measure
suitable to each man's occasions, estimated by himself.

Rom. xii. 3. How many those are, and how far they may qualify us to judge or discourse about those transcendent matters, is hard to define; but most certainly they never can clash with one another; no light in any manner imparted by God can obscure the doctrine declared by him, no doctrine can thwart principles instilled by him. The latter sorts appertain only to material and sensible objects; which therefore can only enable us to deduce, or to examine conclusions relating to them; and being applied to things of another kind, are abused, so as to become apt to produce great mistakes: as for instance, most ancient philosophers observing, that the changes and vicissitudes in nature were generally by the same matters undergoing several alterations, or putting on different shapes; and that bodies once being in rest, did usually consist in that state, until by impulse of other bodies they were put into motion, did thence frame such axioms, or principles of discourse, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*; and *Quicquid movetur, ab alio movetur*: which propositions supposing them true in relation to the present conditions and powers of sensible things, yet were it unlawful to stretch them unto beings of another kind and nature, (to beings immaterial and insensible,) or to infer thence generally, that in the utmost possibility of things there is not any creative, or any self-motive power: even as from the like premises it would be vain to conclude, that there be no other beings subsistent beside those which strike our senses, or discover themselves by sensible effects. ^c In like manner, it cannot be reasonable out of principles drawn from ordinary experience, about these most low and imperfect things, to collect, that there can be no other kind of unions, of distinctions, of generations, of processions, than such as

^c Id quod Deus est, secundum id quod est nec humano sermone edici, nec humanis auribus percipi, nec humanis sensibus colligi potest. *Novat. de Trin.* cap. 7.

Ὁμοιωσάμενος γὰρ, ὡς ἡμεῖς ἰσχυρῶς, ἡ τῶν ἡμετέρων τὰ τῷ Θεῷ. *Naz. Or.* 37. de Sp. S.

our own gross sense doth represent to us : reason itself more forcibly doth oblige us to think that to sublimer beings there do pertain modes of existence and action, unions and distinctions, influences and emanations of a more high and perfect kind, such as our coarse apprehension cannot adequate, nor our rude language express; which we, perhaps, have no faculty subtile enough to conceive distinctly, nor can attain any congruous principles, from which to discourse solidly about them^d. To judge of these things, if we will not, against the Philosopher's rule, μεταβαίνειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος, *shift kinds*, or use improper and impertinent arguments, we must *compare spiritual things with spiritual*^e, so as to draw conclusions about spirituals only from principles revealed by God's Spirit, the sole master of spiritual science; so also as to express them not ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις, *in terms devised by human wisdom*, but in such as the Holy Spirit hath suggested; for ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος, a man endowed merely with common sense (or natural reason) cannot δέχεσθαι, *apprehend*, or perceive those *things of God, which only the Spirit of God doth know*. To improve and press which consideration farther,

3. We may consider the weakness and shortness of our reason, even about things most familiar and easy to us; the little or nothing we by our utmost diligence can attain to know, concerning their intrinsic essences, their properties, their causes and manners of production. What do we more commonly hear, than earnest complaints from the most industrious searchers of natural knowledge concerning the great obscurity of nature, the difficulty of finding truth, the blindness of our mind, and impotency of our reason? And should they be silent, yet experience plainly would speak how difficult, if not impossible, it is to arrive unto any clear and sure knowledge of these com-

^d Cum quaeritur quid tres, magna inopia humanum laborat eloquium; dictum est tamen tres personæ, non ut illud diceretur, sed ne taceretur. *Aug. de Trin.* 5. 9.

Κρίνισιμα τῶν ἰσχυρῶν καὶ ἀσθενῶν ὕδιν. *Naz. Orat.* 45. (ad Evagr.)

^e Πνευματικὰ πνευματικῶς συγκρίνυν. *1 Cor.* ii. 13.

mon objects ; seeing the most sedulous inquiries, undertaken by the choicest wits for above two thousand years, have scarce perhaps exhibited one unquestionable theorem in natural philosophy, one unexceptionable maxim of ethical prudence or policy ; all things being still exposed to doubt and dispute, as they were of old, when first admiration and curiosity did prompt men to hunt after the causes of things : the most however that, after all our care and toil, we can perceive, doth not exceed some faint colours, some superficial figures, some gross effects of things, while their radical properties and their immediate causes remain enveloped and debarred from our sight in unaccessible darkness. Shall we then, who cannot pierce into the nature of a pebble, that cannot apprehend how a mushroom doth grow, that are baffled in our philosophy about a gnat, or a worm, debate and decide (beyond what is taught us from above) concerning the precise manner of divine essence, subsistence, or generation ? [†] *I do*, saith St. Chrysostom, *eat meats ; but how they are divided into phlegm, into blood, into juice, into choler, I am ignorant ; these things, which every day we see and taste, we do not know ; and are we curious about the essence of God ? We* are (as Aristotle himself, no dunce, no idiot, doth confess) but *owl-eyed*, πρὸς τὰ τῇ φύσει φανερώτατα πάντων, *in regard to things naturally most evident*, and palpable ; and can we be such Lynceus's, as to see through the farthest recesses of infinity ? *Hardly*, saith the Wisdom of Solomon, *do we guess aright of things upon the earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us ; but the things that are in heaven, who hath searched out ?* Yea, and the genuine Solomon himself, *I said, I will be wise ; but it was far from me : that which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out ?* What is more remote, what more profound, than God's nature ? who then can find it out ? Sooner with our hands may we touch the extreme surface of the skies, sooner with our eyes may we pierce to the

Κατέσθω οὖν
τὸ φιλόσοφος
ἐν ἀπειδίνοις.
Greg. Naz.
Or. 26.

Arist. Met.
ii. 1.

Wis. ix. 13.

Ecclef. vii.
23, 24.

[†] θεώματα ἰσθίω, τὸ δὲ πῶς μερίζονται εἰς φλέγμα, εἰς αἷμα, εἰς χυμὸν, εἰς χολήν, ἀγνοῶ ταῦτα ἅπτε βλεπομὲν καὶ ἐκάστην ἡμίραν ἰσθίουσιν ἀγνοῶμεν, καὶ τὴν ἐρίαν τῷ Θεῷ πολυπραγμοῦμεν ; Chrys. Περὶ ἀνακατάληπτου. α.

centre of the earth: so it is expressly told to us in Job; *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out* Job xi. 7, *the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?*

4. It may be considered, that we daily see and observe things, which, did not manifest experience convince us of their being, we should be apt to disbelieve their possibility; sense no less than faith doth present us with objects, to bare reason improbable and unconceivable; so that should we attend to the scruples injected thereby, we should hardly take things for possible, which we behold existent; we should distrust the greatest evidence of sense, and by our logic put out our eyes. Who would believe, that, did he not every day see it; who can conceive how, although he seeth it, from a little dry, ill-favoured, insipid seed thrown into the earth, there shortly would rise so goodly a plant, endued with so exact figure, so fragrant smell, so delicate taste, so lively colour; by what engines it attracteth, by what discretion it culleth out, by what hands it mouldeth its proper aliment; by what artifice it doth elaborate the same so curiously, and incorporate it with itself? What virtue could we imagine in nature able to digest an earthy juice into the pellucid clearness of crystal, into the invincible firmness of a diamond? Who would not be an Infidel, did not his sight assure him of the miracles achieved by that blind plastic force, which without eye or hand doth frame such varieties of exquisite workmanship, inimitable, and far surpassing the skill of the greatest artist? That a little star, from so vast a distance, in a moment, should make impression on our eyes, replenishing with its light or image so spacious a region all about it, were we blind we should hardly believe, we scarce could fancy: how, without knowing the organs of speech, or the manner of applying them, without any care or pain employed by us, we so conform our voice, as to express what word, what accent we please; how we do this, or that we can do it, as it will confound our thought to imagine, so it would stagger our faith to believe, did not our conscience persuade us, that we can and do speak.

1 John iii.
20.

It is upon occasion very commonly said, I should never have believed it, had I not seen it; and that men speak so in earnest, many such instances declare. Now if we can give credit to our sense against the suffrage or scruple of our reason in things not so distanced from our capacity of knowledge, shall we not much more yield our belief unto God's express word in things so infinitely distant from it? If common experience can subdue our judgments, and compel us to a belief of things incredible, shall our reason demur at submitting to divine authority? If the dictate of our conscience doth convince us, shall not we much more surrender to the testimony of God, who is *greater than our conscience, and knoweth all things*? If we do believe, because we seem to know by seeing ourselves; we should rather believe, because we surely know by hearing from God: for sense may deceive us, and often needeth correction from reason; God cannot deceive, and reason often is by him corrected: which leadeth me to a farther consideration, that,

1 John v.
10.
1 Cor. i. 25.

5. The propositions clearly delivered unto us by God himself, are upon many accounts more unquestionably true, more credible than the experiments of any sense, or principles of any science: whence if there happen to arise any seeming contest between these, a precedence is due to the former, in derogation to the latter; it is fit that we rather give our eyes and our ears, our fancies and our reasons the lie, than anywise, by diffidence to his word, put an affront on God, (for to disbelieve him is, as St. John telleth us, to give him the lie;) τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the folly of God* (as St. Paul speaketh; that is, the points of faith declared by God, which seem most irrational and cross to the decrees of human wisdom) is σοφώτερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων, *wiser than men*; that is, more assuredly consonant to real truth, than our most undoubted theorems of science, and most current maxims of policy. God is the *Father of all lights*, both of that which immediately shineth from heaven, and of that which glimmereth here below; he is the fountain of all truth, whether natural or supernatural: but his light and his truth he conveyeth into us by manners different;

Some light streameth directly from him, other cometh obliquely, being refracted through divers mediums, or reflected from several objects upon us; the first sort must needs be more bright, and more pure, should be more powerful and efficacious upon our minds: the latter is often blended with material tinctures, is weakened by the interruptions it meeteth with, loseth of its purity and its force by the many conduits it passeth through, by the many shades it mixeth with. Observations of sense do often prove fallacious; and their not ever doing so, dependeth upon divers conditions, a right temper of the organ, a fit disposition of the medium, a just distance of the object; so that conclusions derived from them cannot be so absolutely certain, nor consequently the principles grounded on them. But divine revelation is not obnoxious to such conditions: as the doctrines revealed are in themselves simply true, according to the highest pitch of necessity, because supreme wisdom doth conceive them, and truth itself doth vent them; so the manner of declaring them must be competent, because God himself doth choose and use it; there plainly needeth no more, than yielding an attentive ear, and skill in the language wherein they are expressed, to secure us from error and uncertainty about them; so that well might St. Austin say, that *in other things our conjecture is exercised; but faith alone doth assure our mind.*

There have been those, you know, who have not only advanced doubts concerning propositions attested to by clearest sense, and inferred by strongest discourse; but have by their argute cavillations bid fair to shake the foundations of all human science: but I never heard of any, who believed a God to be, that did contest the infallible truth of his oracles: Socrates, we may be sure, (his excellent scholar assuring us,) who was so incredulous as to disclaim all pretence to wisdom or science, being author of the famous saying, *Hoc tantum scio*; yet greatly did rely upon divine significations, and testimonies, so deemed by

* Ad cætera exercemur per fortasse; at cum de rebus fidei agitur, ibi est certe sine forte. *Aug.*

him, and such as he could come at; alleging, that he, who followeth the conduct of his own reason, instead of God's direction, chooseth a blind and ignorant guide, before one that best seeth, and knoweth the way: *He, saith the Historian, despised all human conceits in respect of God's advice.*

Pfal. xciv.
9, 10.

He that formeth the eye, saith the Psalmist, shall not he see? He that planteth the ear, shall not he hear? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? He that endued us with all our knowing faculties, and presideth over us in the management of them, shall not he supereminently know all that we can? Must not they in reason continue subordinate to his direction? Should they not always discern and judge under correction by him, with an appeal and submission reserved to his better judgment?

I might adjoin, that the object and the end (as well as the author and the manner) of divine revelation doth argue it to surpass all reason, and all sense, in certainty and credibility; for sense and reason converse wholly, or chiefly, about objects material and mutable; revelation about immaterial and immutable things: they direct us in affairs concerning this transitory life; this leadeth us toward eternal felicity. To mistake about those objects, to miscarry in those affairs, is in itself of little, in comparison of no importance: but to judge rightly about these things, to tread safely in these paths, is of infinitely vast concernment; a smaller competency therefore of light and certainty might well suffice to the purposes of reason and sense; but to faith the greatest degree of assurance is worthily due, and seemeth requisite. But farther,

6. Not only the consideration of this mystery, but of all the divine attributes, will in like manner extort from our feeble reason the question of Nicodemus, *How can these things be?* They will all of them equally puzzle our shallow imagination, and baffle our slender understanding: for who can imagine, or understand, how God's immensity doth consist with his perfect simplicity; or that with-

John iii. 9.

ἡ αὐτὴς δὲ πάντ' ἐνδεχόμενα ὑπερτέρα πρὸς τὴν παρὰ τῶν Θεῶν ἁμωσύαν.

out any parts he doth coexist to all possible extension of matter; being all here, and wholly there, and immensely every where? Who can apprehend his indivisible eternity, or how all successions of time are ever present to him, and subject to his view; so that he is not older now than he was when the world began, nor younger than he will be after innumerable ages are past; so that he foreseeth the most contingent events, depending upon causes in their nature arbitrary and indeterminate? Who can fancy, how out of mere nothing, or out of extreme confusion and indisposedness, the world could be created, and framed into so goodly order, by a mere act of will, or by the bare speaking of a word? How without any distraction of thought he governeth affairs, attending to the infinite varieties of thoughts, words, and actions occurring here; and *ita curans universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos*, as St. Austin speaketh? How he is truly said to resolve and to reverse, to love and hate, to be pleased and grieved, all without any real change, or shadow of alteration? How he suffereth many things to happen, which extremely displease him, and which he can easily hinder; and doth not effect many things, which are much desired by him, and very feasible to his power? Why to equal men he distributeth his gifts so unequally; affording to divers abundant means of becoming happy, leaving others destitute of them? What wit of man can reconcile his infinite benignity with his most severe decrees; or compose the seeming differences between his mercy and his justice? Many such perfections and dispensations of God we must steadfastly believe, because they are plainly taught in Scripture; to distrust them being to renounce Christianity; to deny them being to rase up the very foundations of our religion: yet he that shall with his utmost attention of mind endeavour to conceive how they can be, or how they consist together, according to our ordinary notions of things, and the vulgar meaning of words, applied by us to these inferior matters, shall find himself gravelled with innumerable semblances of contra-

Confess. iii.

11.

dition, plunged in depths inscrutable, involved in labyrinths inextricable.

What in practice the cross of Christ was, *a scandal to Jews*, (men dull, but obstinate, and invincibly possessed by vain prejudices,) and *folly to Greeks*, (men of wit and subtilty, but overweeningly conceited of them,) that in speculation may a great part of divine truths be, apt to stumble froward and arrogant men^k; but as there, so here, *blest are they who are not scandalized*; whom no fond scruple or haughty conceit can pervert from readily embracing all necessary verities; such are those we pointed at, which if without extreme folly and impiety we cannot reject, or be diffident of, although surmounting our conceit, and dazzling our reason; then upon the same account, with like facility, we must submit our faith to the doctrines concerning the blessed Trinity standing upon the same authority.

7. Lastly, we may consider and meditate upon the total incomprehensibility of God in all things belonging to him^l; in his nature, his attributes, his decrees, his works and ways; which all are full of depth, mystery, and wonder. God *inhabiteeth* φῶς ἀπρόσιτον, *a light inaccessible* to the dim and weak sight of mortal eyes; which *no man hath seen, nor can see*: No man, as he told his servant Moses, *can see his face* (the very exterior appearance of him) *and live*: he is *a consuming fire*, that will scorch and devour such as by rash inquiries approach too near him^m; *the sight*, it is said, *of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire in the sight of the children of Israel*. Even those spiritual eagles, the quick and strong sighted Seraphims, are obliged to *cover their faces*, as not daring to look upon, nor able to sustain the fulgor of his immediate presence, the flashes of glory and majesty issuing

1 Tim. vi.
16.

Exod.
xxxiii. 23.

Deut. iv.
24.
Exod. xxiv.
17.

Isa. vi. 2.

^k Πλῆθος ἐν τῷ περὶ Μουσίων ἀμύσου, καὶ πολυμνῶν ἀσφασιότητος διαλέγεσθαι, τὰ τὰ θύα ἢ δαιμόνια πράγματα διασκοπεῖν ἀνδρώπῳ ὄντας, οἷον ἀτόλμως τυχευτῶν δάσκειν ἀπὸ δόξης καὶ διανοίας κατὰ τὸ ἰκεῖον μυτιόντας. *Plut. de sera Num. Vind.*

^l Εἰ γὰρ αἱ οἰκονομίαι ἀκατάληπται, πολλὰ μᾶλλον αὐτός. *Chrys. ἀπαν. α.*

^m Scrutator majestatis opprimetur a gloria. *Aug.*

from his throne: and the most illuminate secretaries of heaven, unto whom secrets were disclosed, into which *angels themselves were ambitious to pry*, were sometimes nonplused in contemplation of God's attributes and actions; being in their astonishment forced to cry out, *ὦ βάθος*: *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!* Even his methods of exterior providence are inscrutably mysterious; *his judgments are ἀνεξερεύητα*, like inexhaustible mines, to the bottom whereof we cannot anywise dig by our inquiry; *his paths are ἀνεξιχνίαστοι*, so obscure as not to be traced by any footsteps of our discourse; *his gifts are ἀνεκδιήγητοι*, not to be interpreted, or expressed by our language. And if all concerning God be thus incomprehensible, why should any thing seem incredible? Why out of so many unconceivable mysteries do we choose some, reprobate othersⁿ? Wherefore do we stretch our judgment beyond its limits to things so infinitely exceeding it^o? Why do we suffer our reason to be pragmatical, unjustly invading the office not belonging thereto; *intruding into things which it hath not seen*, nor can comprehend; those *secret things which belong to the Lord our God*, and the comprehension whereof he hath reserved unto himself?

These considerations may suffice in some manner to shew, that *St. Chrysostom* had reason to exclaim so much against the madness, as he styleth it, of those who do *πολυπραγμονεῖν τὴν ἐσῖαν τοῦ Θεοῦ*, are *busily curious in speculation about the essence of God*; daring, *τοῖς οἰκείοις υποβάλλειν λογισμοῖς*, to *subject divine mysteries to their own ratiocinations*: that *St. Basil's* advice was wholesome, *μη*

ⁿ Τί πρὸς ἑρμηνεῖν ἀνίστασαι πτεῖς ὦν; τί καὶ σὺ μετρεῖς τῇ χειρὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸν ἑρμηνεῖν σπειράδην, καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν δρακί; *Greg. Naz. Or. 26.*

^o Δίξῃ ἰσὺν ἀχόρητος, μεγάλῃ ἀκατάληπτος, ὕψι ἀπειρόντος, σοφίᾳ ἀσυμβίβαστος, ἀγαθωσύνῃ ἀμίμητος, καλοσωσίᾳ ἀνεκδιήγητος. *Theoph. ad Autol.*

^p Μάλιστα γὰρ ἵνα ἐκείνη φησὶ φιλονεικῶν εἰδέναι τί τὴν ἐσῖαν τοῦ Θεοῦ. *Chrys. περὶ ἀκατάλ. α.*

Cogitemus si valemus, si non valemus credamus. Aug. Serm. 5. de Temp.

Τίς ἂν τοιαύτη ὁμῶν φιλονεικία τῶν ἱερουργῶν ἂν ἀνθρωπίνῃ φρονήσει ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην νόσον ἐκτεταταί; *Athan. t. i. 625.*

περιεργάζεσθαι τὰ σιωπώμενα, *not to be meddlesome about things, about which holy Scripture is silent*: that ¹ another ancient writer did say no less truly, than prettily, that in these matters *Curiositas reum facit, non peritum*; we may easilier incur blame, than attain skill by nice inquiry into them: that many of the Fathers do with great wisdom dislike and dissuade the searching τὸ πῶς¹, the manner of things being true, or possible, as a suspicious mark, or a dangerous motive of infidelity: that St. Paul's rules, *ῥοῦν*
 Rom. xii. 3. εἰς τὸ σωφροεῖν, *to be wise so as withal to be sober, and modest*; and μὴ ῥοῦν ὑπὲρ ὃ γέγραπται, *not to conceit any*
 1 Cor. iv. 6. *thing without warrant of Scripture*, are in this case most especially to be heeded: that, according to St. Peter's admonition, we should as *new-born babes* (unprepossessed
 1 Pet. ii. 2. with any notions or fancies of our own) *long for, and*
 ἑκπιεῖν, *greedily suck in the sincere milk of the word*; not diluting it with baser liquors of human device: that where God doth interpose his definitive sentence, our reason hath nothing to do but to attend and submit; no right² to vote, no licence to debate the matter; its duty is to listen and approve whatever God speaketh, to read and subscribe to whatever he writeth; at least in any case it should be mute, or ready to follow Job, saying, *Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth*. In fine, the testimony of God, with a sufficient clearness represented to the capacity of an honest and docile mind, (void of all partial respects, and clear from all sorts of prejudice; loving truth, and forward to entertain it; abhorring to wrest or wrack things, to use any fraud or violence upon any principle, or ground of truth;) the testimony of God, I say, so revealed, whatever exception our shallow reason can thrust in, should absolutely convince our judgments, and constrain our faith. If the holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us, (that which also the uniform course of nature and the peaceable government of the world doth also

¹ Zeno Veronens.

² Σαφὲς ἱλαρχὸς ἀπειρίας τὸ πῶς περὶ Θεοῦ λίγαν. *Expos. fid. apud Just. M.*

speak,) that there is but one true God; if it as manifestly
 doth ascribe to the three Persons of the blessed Trinity
 the same august names, the same peculiar characters, the
 same divine attributes, (essential to the Deity,) the same
 superlatively admirable operations of creation and provi-
 dence; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme
 honours, services, praises, and acknowledgments to be paid
 unto them all; this may be abundantly enough to satisfy
 our minds, to stop our mouths, to smother all doubt and
 dispute about this high and holy mystery. It was ex-
 ceeding goodness in God, that he would condescend so
 far to instruct us, to disclose so noble a truth unto us, to
 enrich our minds with that τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως, that
most excellent knowledge of himself; and it would be no
 small ingratitude and unworthiness in us anywise to sus-
 pect his word, or pervert his meaning; anywise to subject
 his venerable oracles to our rude canvasses and cavils.
 In fine, the proper employment of our mind about these
 mysteries, is not to search and speculate about them, to
 discourse flippantly and boldly about them; but with a
 pious credulity to embrace them, with all humble respect
 to adore them.

I have thus endeavoured in some measure to defend the
 outworks of the orthodox doctrine concerning the blessed
 Trinity: it was beside my intent to insist so long thereon;
 but the matter did ἐπιλασσαι, was so attractive, that I
 could not wave shewing my respect thereto.

I proceed now to that which I principally designed, the
 proposing briefly some practical considerations, apt to
 excite us to the exercising our understanding and affec-
 tions upon those wonderful dispensations of grace and
 mercy, vouchsafed to us by the holy Trinity, either
 conjunctly, or (as they κατ' οἰκονομίαν are expressed) sepa-
 rately.

We first should carefully study and duly be affected
 with that gracious consent, and, as it were, confederacy
 of the glorious Three in designing and prosecuting our
 good; their unanimous agreement in uttering those three
 mighty words of favour to mankind, *Faciamus, Redima-*

mus, Salvemus; let us make man out of nothing, let us recover him from sin and perdition, let us crown him with joy and salvation; we should with grateful resentments observe them conspiring to employ their wisdom in contriving fit means and methods to exert their power in effectual accomplishment of what was requisite to the promoting of our welfare, the rescue of us from all misery, the advancing us to the highest degree of dignity, and inflating us in the most perfect condition of happiness, of which our nature is capable; in prosecution of that gracious design, which their joint goodness had projected for us. More distinctly,

1. We should set our mind on God the Father, before the foundation of the world from all eternity, pleasing to forecast with himself the creation of us, and communication of his own image to us; endowing us with most excellent faculties of body and soul; subjecting the visible world to our use and governance; placing us in a state of great accommodation and delight; permitting us to fall, that he might raise us to a higher and better condition; resolving to send his own dear Son from his bosom, to procure and purchase the redemption of mankind; preparing and disposing the world for the reception of so great a mercy, by a general testification of his patience and beneficence, (*giving showers and fruitful seasons, and filling the hearts of men with food and gladness,*) but more especially by prophetic promises, predictions, and prefigurations: also suffering the generality of mankind so to proceed in its ways, as might render it sensible of its error and unhappiness, of the need and benefit of a deliverance; then *in the fulness of time*, when the creature did earnestly groan, and long for its recovery from vanity and slavery, actually sending his only Son, and clothing him with human flesh, that conversing with us, he might discover to us his gracious intentions toward us, might confirm the truth thereof by miraculous works, might instruct us by his heavenly doctrine and holy life in our duty, and the terms of our salvation, then freely delivering him over unto death, and accepting his passion as a

Acts xiv.
17.

Gal. iv. 4.
Rom. viii.
22.

acrifice expiating our sins, and meriting his favour toward us; then raising him as *the first fruits* from the dead, setting him at his right hand, investing him with authority to govern and save those who sincerely would believe in him, and faithfully obey him; also sending and bestowing his holy Spirit to dwell in them, to conduct, confirm, and comfort them in the ways of truth and righteousness. These, with manifold other intercurrent passages of gracious providence ascribed to God the Father, we should seriously mind, and so resent, as to be ravished with admiration of his mercy, to be inflamed with love of his goodness, to be possessed with gratitude toward him, to become thoroughly devoted to his service.

2. We should likewise mind the blessed Son of God concurring with his Father in all his purposes of love and mercy toward us, *in making all things*, and *sustaining them by the word of his power*; but especially in his (toward the freeing us from the desperate miseries, corruptions, and slaveries, into which we were plunged) assuming human nature, leading therein a troublesome and toilsome life, for our benefit and instruction; undergoing a bitter and shameful death, for the atonement of our sins, and reconciliation of us to divine favour; purchasing great and precious promises, procuring high and glorious privileges for us; ascending into heaven to prepare us mansions of bliss; interceding for us with God, and pouring from above manifold blessings upon us; the astonishing miracles of goodness, of wisdom, of condescension and patience, displayed in the management of which undertakings for us, what heart can well conceive, what tongue can utter? What amazement should it produce in us, to consider the brightest efflux of Divine Glory eclipsing and shrouding itself under so dark a cloud of mortal frailty; the Most High stooping into the quality of so mean a creature; the First-born and Heir apparent of heaven descending from his throne of eternal majesty, and voluntarily degrading himself into the *form of a servant*, clad in rags, worn with labour and travel, exposed to contempt and disgrace; to reflect upon the great Crea-

tor and sovereign Lord of all the world, who reared the heavens, and founded the earth, who possesseth and upholdeth all things, needing himself a shelter, pinched with want, taking alms from his slaves, and paying tribute to his subjects; to contemplate the Son of God, willingly styling himself the *Son of man*, really subjecting himself to the duties, the necessities, the infirmities of human nature; suffering the coarsest hardships, and extreme disasters thereof; all this upon freest choice, with full contentment, and perfect submission to so mean and so distasteful a condition!

We may observe with how admirable goodness he did vouchsafe to converse with a froward generation of men, to instruct a stupid and indocile sort of people, with all sorts of beneficence, to oblige an incredulous, insensible, and ingrateful crew; with how invincible a meekness and patience he *endured the contradiction of sinners*, the scornful reproaches, the wrongful calumnies, the spiteful and cruel usages of the envious and malicious world; being to the highest extremity despised, hated, maligned, and abused by those whom he had most highly honoured, most affectionately loved, and conferred the greatest favours upon. We may with astonishment contemplate that strange contest between divine patience and human wickedness, striving which of them should excel; when we do peruse and weigh those enigmatical passages, God accused by man of blasphemy, the eternal Wisdom aspersed with folly, Truth itself impleaded of imposture, essential Love made guilty of mischief, and supreme Goodness styled a malefactor; infinite Power beat down, and trampled upon by impotent malice; the Judge of all the world, the Fountain of all authority and right, arraigned, condemned, and executed for injustice; the *Desire of all nations* rejected by his own country and kindred; the Joy of paradise (whose lightsome countenance doth cheer heaven itself) almost overwhelmed with grief, uttering lamentable groans, tortured with grievous agonies; the very heart of God bleeding, and the sole Author of life expiring.

We may farther study Jesus, with a hearty compassion, and tears gushing from his inmost bowels, pitying not these his own sufferings, but for the vengeance for them due and decreed unto his persecutors: we should mark him excusing their fault, and praying for their pardon; dying willingly for their good, when he died violently by their hand; passionately desiring their salvation, when they maliciously procured his destruction.

We should mind all the actions of the Son of God, our Saviour, with the most wise grounds, endearing circumstances, and precious fruits of them; his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession; as containing instances of the greatest charity and humility possible showed unto us, as arguments of the greatest love and gratitude due from us: mind them we should most seriously, so as to be heartily affected with them, so as to esteem worthily the transcendent honour done us by God assuming our nature, and exalting us to a conjunction with the divine nature; so as to be deeply sensible of our obligation to so immense a charity, that could do and suffer so much for us, without any desert of ours, yea, notwithstanding our exceedingly bad deserts, our rebellions and enmities against him; so as to detest the heinousness of our sins, that needed so mighty an expiation, that caused so horrid a tragedy; so as not to neglect so great salvation so frankly offered, so dearly purchased for us; not to frustrate the designs of so unoonceivable love and goodness, so as to obey readily so gracious a Master, to follow carefully so admirable an example; so as in imitation of him, and for his sake, to be meek and humble in heart, and in deed, seeing he did so infinitely condescend and abase himself for us; to be patient and submissive to his will, who stooped so low, and suffered so much for us; so as to bear a general affection to mankind, grounded like his, not upon any particular interests, nor limited by any partial respects, but extended freely, in real desire and intention toward all; liberally to impart the good things we possess, and patiently to brook the

crosses we meet with, and heartily to forgive the offences done to us; for that he freely did part with the greatest glories of eternity, with the highest dignities and the richest treasures of heaven, for our sake; when we were *enemies in our minds by wicked works, dead in trespasses and sins*, guilty of numberless grievous offences against him, by his blood redeeming us from wrath, reconciling us to the mercy and favour of God.

3. We should also meditate upon the blessed Spirit of God, with equal goodness conspiring, and cooperating with all the purposes, to all the effects of grace, which conduce to our everlasting happiness; more especially as the repairer of our decayed frames, the enlivener of our dead souls, the infuser of spiritual light into our dark minds, the kindler of spiritual warmth into our cold hearts; the raiser of spiritual appetite to righteousness, and the relish of goodness in our stupid senses; the imparters of spiritual strength and vigour to our feeble powers; the author of all liberty, loosing us from captivity under the tyranny of Satan, from vassalage unto our own carnal lusts and passions; from subjection to a hard and imperious law, from bondage to the terrors of a guilty conscience: as him, that enableth us to perform the duties, and accomplish the conditions, required of us in order to our salvation, that qualifyeth us to be the sons of God by his effectual grace, and assureth us that we are so by his comfortable testimony; as our sure guide in the ways of truth and virtue; our faithful counsellor in all doubts and darkneses; our mighty support and succour in all needs, in all distresses; our ready guard against all assaults and temptations; our sweet comforter in all sadnesses and afflictions: who doth insinuate good thoughts, doth kindle holy desires, doth cherish pious resolutions, doth further honest endeavours, in us: who only doth inflame our hearts with devotion toward God; doth encourage, doth enable us to approach unto him; doth prompt us with fit matter of request, and becometh advocate for the good success of our prayers.

We should mind him as the root of all good fruits growing in us, or sprouting from us; the producer of all good habits formed in us, the assister of all good works performed by us, the spring of all true content that we enjoy; to whom our embracing the faith, our continuing in hope, our working in charity, the purification of our hearts, the mortification of our lusts, the sanctification of our lives, the salvation of our souls are principally due, are most justly ascribed: as the author and preserver of so inestimable benefits unto us, let us mind him; and withal let us consider him as condescending to be a loving friend and constant guest to so mean and unworthy creatures; vouchsafing to attend over us, to converse with us, to dwell in us, rendering our souls holy temples of his divinity, royal thrones of his majesty, bright orbs of his heavenly light, pleasant paradises of his blissful presence; our souls, which naturally are profane receptacles of wicked and impure affections, dark cells of false and fond imaginations, close prisons of black and sad thoughts: as graciously *striving with us*, striving to open and enter into our hearts, barred against him by vain conceits, and vicious inclinations: striving to reclaim us from the sins and errors, into which we are wont heedlessly or wilfully to precipitate ourselves; striving to make us, what in all duty and wisdom we should be, capable of divine favour, and fit for everlasting happiness: as enduring patiently manifold displeasures and disrespect from us, our rude oppositions against him, our frequent neglects of his kind admonitions, our many perverse humours, wanton freaks, wilful miscarriages, and unworthy dealings toward him.

We should thus mind the blessed Spirit of God, and be suitably affected toward him; so as to be duly sensible and thankful for those unexpressible gifts and blessings indulged to us by him; so as to render all love and reverence, all praise and glory, all obedience and service to him, especially so as to admit him cheerfully into our hearts; yea, invite him thither by our earnest prayers;

to make fit preparations for his reception and entertainment, (by cleansing our hearts from all loathsome impurities,) to make him welcome, and treat him kindly, with all civil respect, with all humble observance; not grieving and vexing him by our distasteful crossness and peevishness; not tempting him by our fond presumption, or base treachery; not extinguishing his heavenly light and holy fire by our foul lusts, our damp stupidities, our cold neglects, our neglects to foment and nourish them by the food of devout meditations and zealous desires: so let us mind him, as to admit gladly his gentle illapses, to delight in his most pleasant society, to hearken to his faithful suggestions, to comply with all his kindly motions, to behave ourselves modestly, consistently, and officiously toward him.

Thus should we employ our mind, all the faculties of our soul, our understanding, our will, our affections upon the blessed Trinity, the Supreme of all things above, the Founder of that celestial society, into which as Christians we are inserted; the Sovereign of that heavenly kingdom of which we are subjects; the Fountain of all the good and happiness we can hope for in that superior state. To the performance of which duty there be arguments and inducements innumerable; it is the most proper and con-natural object of our mind, that for which it is fittest, and for which it was designed; the best intelligible, and infinitely most amiable of all things. It is the most worthy and noble object, the contemplation of which, and affection whereto, will most elevate, most enrich, most adorn, most enlarge the capacities, and most satisfy the appetites of our souls; it is the most sweet and pleasant object; wherein all light, all beauty, all perfection do shine; the sight and love of which do constitute Paradise, and beautify heaven itself. It is the most useful and beneficial object of our mind, which will best instruct us in what it concerneth us to know, will most incite us to those duties which we are obliged to perform, will be most efficacious to the begetting in us those dispositions, which are indif-

penfably requisite for the attainment and for the enjoyment of that everlasting blifs ; unto which that one blessed Unity and glorious Trinity in its infinite mercy bring us all: to whom be all glory, honour, and praife for ever.
Amen.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.



